

# ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES



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THE TRUE PRINCESS.



# FAIRY TALES

BY

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLORS



NEW YORK

GILBERT H. McKIBBIN

MDCCCXCIX



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Stories  
from  
Hans Andersen











	PAGE
A TRUE PRINCESS, . . . . .	9
THE OLD STREET LAMP, . . . . .	11
THE SWINEHERD, . . . . .	22
THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE SWEEP, . . . . .	30
THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL, . . . . .	38
THE TINDER-BOX, . . . . .	43
THUMBELINA, . . . . .	56
THE STORKS, . . . . .	74
THE BRAVE TIN SOLDIER, . . . . .	83
OLE LUK-OIE, . . . . .	91
THE UGLY DUCKLING, . . . . .	110
LITTLE CLAUS AND BIG CLAUS, . . . . .	122
THE LITTLE MERMAID, . . . . .	135
THE WILD SWANS, . . . . .	151
THE SNOW QUEEN, . . . . .	165
THE ANGEL, . . . . .	189







# ANDERSEN'S TALES.

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## A TRUE PRINCESS.

THERE was once upon a time a Prince who wanted to marry a Princess, but she must be a true Princess. So he travelled through the whole world to find one, but there was always something against each. There were plenty of Princesses, but he could not find out if they were true Princesses. In every case there was some little defect, which showed the genuine article was not yet found. So he came home again in very low spirits, for he had wanted very much to have a true Princess. One night there was a dreadful storm; it thundered and lightened and the rain streamed down in torrents! It was fearful! There was a knocking heard at the Palace gate, and the old King went to open it.

There stood a Princess outside the gate; but oh, in what a sad plight she was from the rain and the storm! The water was running down from her hair and her dress into the points of her shoes and



out at the heels again. And yet she said she was a true Princess!

“Well, we shall soon find that!” thought the old Queen. But she said nothing, and went into the sleeping-room, took off all the bed-clothes, and laid a pea on the bottom of the bed. Then she put twenty mattresses on top of the pea, and twenty eider-down quilts on the top of the mattresses. And this was the bed in which the Princess was to sleep.

The next morning she was asked how she had slept.

“Oh, very badly!” said the Princess. “I scarcely closed my eyes all night! I am sure I don’t know what was in the bed. I lay on something so hard that my whole body is black and blue. It is dreadful!”

Now they perceived that she was a true Princess, because she had felt the pea through the twenty mattresses and the twenty eider-down quilts.

No one but a true Princess could be so sensitive.

So the Prince married her, for now he knew that at last he had got hold of a true Princess. And the pea was put into the Royal Museum, where it is still to be seen if no one has stolen it.

Now this is a true story.



## THE OLD STREET LAMP.

DID you ever hear the story of the Old Street Lamp? It is not a very funny story, but at any rate, it may be worth hearing for once. It was such an honest Old Street Lamp, and for very many years it had faithfully done its duty, but now it was about to retire. This evening it hung for the last time on its pole, and gave light to the street. It felt as an old ballet-girl might feel who is making her last appearance on the stage, and knows that to-morrow she will be forgotten in her garret.

The Lamp was in great dread of the morrow, for it knew that it was to be taken for the first time to the Town Hall to be inspected by the six-and-thirty town councillors, who were to decide whether it was fit for further service. They would determine whether it should be sent to illuminate one of the bridges, or out in the country to a factory, or perhaps it would be despatched direct to some iron-foundry to be melted down. In this case anything might be made of it, but it was greatly exercised by the question whether it would remember, in its new state, that it had once been a Street Lamp. Whatever happened, it would be separated from the watchman and his wife, and it had come to regard



itself as one of the family. When it first became a Street Lamp, the watchman—then young and vigorous—was first appointed to his post. Yes, it was now a long time ago!

The wife was rather proud at that time. Only in the evening, when she passed the Lamp, did she deign to look at it; in the daytime, never. But of recent years, when all three, the watchman, his wife, and the Lamp, had grown old together, the wife had assisted in cleaning and trimming it; and an honest pair they were, for they had never cheated it of a single drop of oil.

It was its last evening in the street, and to-morrow it was to be taken to the Town Hall. These reflections filled the Lamp with very sombre thoughts, so you can easily guess what kind of light it gave. But it thought, besides, of many other things. It had seen so much in its time, had shone on so many events. It knew, perhaps, more than the six-and-thirty councillors put together; but it did not say so, for it was an honest old Lamp, and would not hurt the feelings of anybody, and least of all those of the authorities.

Yes, it remembered many things, and now and then its flame would suddenly flash up—just as if the Lamp felt that it, too, would be remembered. "There was that handsome young man," it thought; "many years ago he came with a letter; it was written on rose-colored paper—very dainty it was, with a gilt edge; the writing was elegant—it was the handwriting of a lady. He read it twice and







kissed it, and he turned his eyes to me and said: 'I am the happiest of men!' Yes, only he and I knew what was written in that first letter from his true love.

"I remember also another pair of eyes; it is wonderful how one's thoughts fly from one thing to another. Here, in this street, there was once a grand funeral. A beautiful young lady lay in a coffin on a velvet-covered bier; there were a great number of flowers and wreaths, and so many torches were burning that I was quite overpowered. The pavement was crowded with people who followed in the procession; but when the torches were gone, and I began to look round, one person was still standing against the post, weeping. I shall never forget the mournful eyes that looked up to me."

Many such thoughts passed through the mind of the Old Street Lamp, which was shining to-night for the last time.

The sentry when relieved from his post knows at least who is to be his successor, and may whisper a few words to him; but the Lamp did not know this, although it might have given a hint or two concerning rain or rough weather, together with some information as to how far the moonshine lit up the pavement, and from what side the wind was blowing.

In the gutter stood three persons, who introduced themselves to the Lamp, thinking that it could appoint its own successor. The first was a herring's head that could shine in the dark. There would be



a great saving of oil, it thought, if it were put at the top of the lamp-post. The second was a piece of rotten wood, which also gleamed in the dark—"More brightly, at any rate, than a haddock," it said to itself. Moreover, it was the last piece of a tree that had once been the glory of the forest. The third was a glow-worm. Whence it had come the Lamp could not make out, but the worm was there, and it shone. Both the rotten wood and the herring's head declared, however, most solemnly that the glow-worm only gave light at certain times, and that it had therefore no right to take part in the competition.

The Old Lamp remarked that none of them shone sufficiently to be a Street Lamp; but they refused to believe this, and when they heard that the Lamp itself could not appoint its successor, they declared that they were very glad to hear it, for in their opinion it was too worn-out to be able to make a proper choice.

At this moment the wind came rushing round the corner. It whistled through the Old Lamp, saying: "What do I hear? Are you going away to-morrow? Is it the last time that I shall meet you here? Well' then I must make you a present. I will blow into your brain-box in such a way that you will not only remember clearly and distinctly what you have heard and seen, but you will become so clear-sighted as to see everything that is told or read about in your presence."

"Well, that is really a very fine gift," said the



Old Lamp. "Many thanks! I only hope I am not going to be melted down."

"That will not happen yet," said the wind, "and now I will blow memory into you also. If you receive many presents like this you will be able to pass your old age very pleasantly."

"I only hope I shall not be melted down," said the Lamp; "but could you in that case still enable me to retain my memory?"

"Do be reasonable, Old Lamp," said the wind, and flew away. At the same moment the moon glided forth from behind the clouds. "What do you propose to give?" said the wind.

"I cannot give anything," said the moon; "I am on the wane. Besides, the lamps have never shone on my account; on the contrary, I have been shining for the benefit of the lamps." And she disappeared behind the clouds, so as to avoid being troubled again.

Just then a drop of water fell upon the Lamp, as if from the roof; but the drop explained that it came from the gray clouds, and was also a gift, perhaps the best of all. "I shall penetrate you, so that you will have the power of turning into rust in a single night, and to crumble into dust, if you wish it." This, the Lamp thought, was a shabby present, and the wind thought so too, and blew as loudly as he could: "Is there nothing better?"

Just then a brilliant shooting-star fell, leaving a bright gleaming streak in its wake. "What was that?" cried the herring's head. "Did not a star



fall? I really think it went into the Lamp. Well, if such high-born persons apply for this post, we may just as well go home and go to bed." And this they did, all three.

But the Old Lamp shed a marvellously strong light around. "That was indeed a glorious gift! Those bright stars, which I have always admired, which shine more brilliantly than I have ever shone, although I have tried with all my might—they have noticed me, the poor Old Lamp. They have sent me a gift that will enable all those whom I love to see everything that I can remember and can see quite clearly; and in this lies the truest pleasure, for joy that we cannot share with others is only half a joy."

"That is a very excellent sentiment," said the wind; "but perhaps you do not know that wax-lights are necessary. If a wax-light be not lit up within you, nobody will be any the better for your faculties—you will not enable others to see anything. The stars have not thought of this; they think that everything that shines must at least have a wax-light inside. But now I am tired," said the wind; "I will go to rest." So it went down.

"Wax-lights, indeed!" exclaimed the Lamp. "I have never had them yet, nor am I likely to get them now. I only hope I shall not be melted down!"

The next day—well, we had better pass over the next day—but the next evening, the Lamp lay in a



grandfather's chair. And where? Why, at the old watchman's house!

He had asked as a favor of the thirty-six town councillors that he might be allowed to keep the Old Lamp in consideration of his long and faithful service. He himself, he said, had first lit it on the day when he was appointed watchman four-and-twenty years ago. He looked upon it as his child, for he had no other; so they gave him the Lamp; and now it was lying in the grandfather's chair, close by the stove. It seemed as if it had grown bigger, for it occupied nearly the whole of the chair. As the old people sat down to supper, they looked kindly at the Lamp, to which they would willingly have granted a place at their table.

True, it was only in a cellar that they lived, two yards below the street, and one was obliged to go through a stone-paved passage to get into the room; but it was warm and comfortable when one got there, for strips of list had been nailed on to the door. It was all very trim and clean; curtains were hung round the bedstead and above the small windows, and on the window-sill stood two remarkable flower-pots. Christian, the sailor, had brought them home from the East or West Indies; they were made of clay, and represented two elephants, the backs of which were missing, but they were filled with earth. In one of them some fine onions were growing—that was the old people's vegetable-garden; in the other stood a large geranium in full bloom—this was their flower-garden. On the wall



hung a large colored print, representing the Congress of Vienna, showing all the kings and emperors at once; a clock from Bornholm, with heavy leaden weights, went tic! tac! tic! tac!—it always went too fast, but this was better, said the old people, than if it were to be too slow.

They were eating their supper, and the Old Street Lamp was lying in the grandfather's chair, close to the warm stove. It seemed to the Lamp as if the whole world were turned upside down. But when the old watchman looked at it, and spoke of all that it had gone through, in storm and rain, in the bright, short summer nights, or through drifting snow, when it was nice to get into the shelter of the cellar, then everything seemed all right to the Old Lamp! It saw everything as if it still existed. Yes, the wind had certainly kindled a bright light within it.

The old people were very industrious and active; not a single hour was wasted. On Sunday afternoon a book of some kind was brought out, generally a book of travels, and the old man would read aloud about Africa, with its great forests, in which elephants were running about quite wild. The old woman would listen, and would then go over and look at the clay elephants which served as flower-pots. "I can almost imagine it," she said. But the Lamp greatly wished that a wax-taper could be lit up within it, for the old lady would then have been able to see everything just as the Lamp itself saw it—the tall trees with their branches closely intertwined, the naked negroes on horseback, and



whole herds of elephants treading down bamboos and bushes with their broad feet.

"What is the use of all my good qualities when there is no wax candle?" sighed the Lamp. "They have only oil and tallow candles, and that is not much."

One day a parcel of wax-candle ends was brought down into the cellar. The larger pieces were burnt; and the smaller ones the old woman used to wax her thread when she was sewing. There were plenty of wax candles now, but it never occurred to any one to put a little piece in the Lamp. "Here I stand with all my rare qualities," said the Lamp; "I have everything within me, but I cannot share it with others. They do not know that I can change these white walls into the most beautiful wall-paper, that I can transform them into magnificent forests, or to anything else that they may wish—they do not know that." The Lamp, however, neat and polished, was standing in a corner where it caught the eyes of everybody. Strangers might say it was a bit of rubbish; but the old folk took no notice, for they loved the Street Lamp.

One day—it was the watchman's birthday—the old woman went to the Lamp and said, smiling: "I will make an illumination for him." The old Lamp rattled, for it thought that at last the light would be lit; but oil was put into it, and not a wax taper. It burnt the whole evening; but it knew that the gift of the stars, the best gift of all, was a hidden treasure in this life. Then it dreamed—for



when one possesses such faculties it is easy to dream—that the old people were dead, and that it was taken to an iron-foundry to be recast. It was just as much alarmed as when it was taken to the Town Hall to be examined by the six-and-thirty councillors; but although it had the power of crumbling to rust and dust when it wished to, it did not make use of this gift. So it went into the furnace, and was turned into as beautiful a candlestick as any one could wish to put a wax-light into. It had the shape of an angel holding a bouquet; in the middle of the bouquet the wax candle was placed, and the candlestick was put on a green writing-table. It was a pleasant, comfortable room; there were many books, and beautiful pictures hung on the walls; it was the room of a poet. Everything that he thought and wrote appeared before him; the room was transformed into vast, dark forests, or into sunny meadows, where the stork strutted about, or again into the deck of a ship rolling in the foaming sea.

“What qualities I possess!” said the Lamp, when it awoke. “I could almost wish to be melted down—but no, that must not be, so long as the old people live; they love me for my own sake, I am as good as a child to them, they have polished me and filled me with oil, and I am just as well off as the picture of the Congress, which is certainly something very aristocratic.”

And from that time forth it enjoyed more inward peace; and this the dear Old Street Lamp well deserved.



## THE SWINEHERD.

THERE was once a poor Prince, who possessed a very small kingdom. It was, however, large enough to marry upon, and he greatly wished to find a wife. Now, it was certainly somewhat bold of him to say to the Emperor's daughter: "Will you have me?" but he did venture it, for his name was famous far and wide. There were hundreds of Princesses who would have said "Thank you," into the bargain, but we shall see what she said.

On the grave of the Prince's father grew a rose-tree. Oh, what a beautiful rose-tree it was! It only bloomed once every five years, and it bore but a single rose; but what a rose! Its scent was so sweet that whoever smelt it forgot all sorrow and trouble.

The Prince also possessed a nightingale that could sing as if all the most beautiful melodies were collected in its little throat. Both the rose and the nightingale the Princess was to have; so they were put into large silver boxes and sent to her. The Emperor ordered the presents to be taken into the large hall where the Princess was playing at "visiting" with her maids-of-honor. They never did



anything else. When she saw the large boxes containing the presents the Princess clapped her hands with joy.

"I hope it is a little pussy-cat," she said; but out came the beautiful rose.

"Oh, how wonderfully it is made!" said all the maids-of-honor. "It is more than nice—it is charming."

But the Princess touched it, and she almost began to cry. "Fie, Papa!" she said; "it is not artificial—it is only a natural rose!"

"Fie!" said all the maids-of-honor; "it is only a natural rose!"

"Let us first see what is in the other box before we get angry," said the Emperor; and out came the nightingale. It sang so sweetly that it was impossible at the moment to say anything in dispraise of it.

"*Superbe! charmant!*" said the maids-of-honor, for they all spoke French, each worse than the other.

"How that bird reminds me of the late Emperor's musical-box," said an old cavalier. "It has exactly the same tone, and the same expression."

"Yes," said the Emperor, and he wept like a little child.

"I should scarcely think that it is a real bird," said the Princess.

"Oh, yes; it is a real bird," said those who had brought it.

"Then let the bird fly away," said the Princess; but she refused to allow the Prince to call.



The Prince, however, was not to be frightened; he smeared his face with brown and black dye, pressed his cap down over his face, and knocked at the door. "Good day, Emperor," he said; "could I not get a situation here in the palace?"

"Well, there are so many who ask for an appointment," said the Emperor; "but let me see; I just need a person to look after the pigs, for we have a great many of them."

So the Prince was employed as Imperial swineherd. He received a poor little room down by the pig-sty, and there he had to stay. But the whole day long he sat and worked, and by the evening he had made a nice little pot with tiny bells all around it, so that when the pot boiled the bells rang out merrily, and played the old tune:

"Oh, my darling Augustine!  
All is lost, lost, lost!"

But the most peculiar thing was, that by holding one's fingers in the steam of the pot, one could smell what kind of meals were being prepared in each kitchen in the town. You see, it was quite a different thing from the rose.

Now, the Princess was out walking with all her maids-of-honor, and when she heard the tune she stopped at once, and looked greatly pleased, for she, too, could play "Oh, my darling Augustine." This was the only tune that she could play on the piano, but then she played it with only one finger.

"Why, that is the tune I play," she exclaimed;







"he must be a well-educated swineherd. Listen! you must go in and ask him what the price of that instrument is."

So one of the maids-of-honor had to go in, but she first put on a pair of slippers.

"What do you want for the pot?" asked the maid-of-honor.

"I want ten kisses from the Princess," said the swineherd.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed the maid-of-honor.

"I cannot make it cheaper," said the swineherd.

"Well, what does he say?" asked the Princess.

"I really can't repeat it," said the maid-of-honor; "it is too horrible."

"Well, you can whisper it." So the lady whispered it.

"He is very rude," said the Princess; and walked away. But when she had gone a little way, the bells began to ring again, very sweetly:

"Oh, my darling Augustine!  
All is lost, lost, lost!"

"Listen," said the Princess: "ask him if he will take ten kisses from my maids-of-honor."

"No, thank you," said the swineherd; "ten kisses from the Princess, or I keep the pot."

"Oh, how tiresome!" said the Princess; "well, you must stand round me so that nobody can see it." And the maids-of-honor stood round her, the swineherd received the ten kisses, and the Princess



got the pot. Then there was great rejoicing! In the evening, and the whole day long, the pot was kept boiling; there was not a kitchen in the whole town of which they did not know what it had cooked, at the chamberlain's as well as at the shoemaker's. The maids-of-honor danced and clapped their hands.

"We know who is going to have sweet soup and pancakes; we know who is going to have gruel and cutlets."

"How very interesting, very interesting indeed!" said the lady superintendent.

"Yes, but you must keep quiet," said the Princess, "for I am the Emperor's daughter." "Quite so!" said every one.

The swineherd—that is to say, the Prince, although so far as they knew, he was only an ordinary swineherd—did not let a day go past without making something. One day he made a rattle. When he swung it round it played all the waltzes, schottisches, and polkas that had been composed since the creation of the world.

"This is superb," said the Princess, as she went past; "I have never heard such a beautiful composition before. Go in and ask him what that instrument costs; but I won't kiss him."

"He wants a hundred kisses from the Princess," said the maid-of-honor, who went in to ask him.

"He must be mad!" exclaimed the Princess, and went off; but when she had gone a little way, she stopped. "One must encourage art," she said. "I



am the Emperor's daughter. Tell him he shall have ten kisses, as yesterday; the rest he can have from my maids-of-honor."

"Oh, but we would rather not!" said the maids-of-honor.

"That is all nonsense," said the Princess; "if I can kiss, you can kiss too. You just remember that I give you board and wages." So the maid-of-honor had to go down to the swineherd again.

"A hundred kisses from the Princess," said he, "or each shall keep his own."

"Stand round," she said, and all the maids-of-honor stood round while he kissed the Princess.

"What is that crowd down by the pig-sty?" said the Emperor, who had stepped on to the balcony. He rubbed his eyes and put his spectacles on. "Yes, it is the maids-of-honor in mischief again. I must see what they are doing." So he pulled his slippers up behind, for they were shoes which he had trodden down. Mercy! how he hurried. When he came into the yard he walked very softly, and the maids-of-honor were so busy in counting the kisses, so that everything should be fair, and that the swineherd should not get too many, and yet not too few, that they did not notice the Emperor. He stood on tiptoe. "What!" said he, when he saw that the swineherd and the Princess were kissing each other; and he hit them on the head with his slipper, just as the swineherd received his eighty-sixth kiss. "Be off with you!" cried the Emperor, for he was angry, and both the Princess and the



swineherd were expelled from the empire. There she stood crying, and the swineherd scolded her, while the rain poured in torrents. "Oh! miserable wretch that I am," said the Princess; "if I had only taken the handsome Prince. Oh! how unhappy I am."

But the swineherd went behind a tree, washed the black and brown dye from his face, threw away the shabby clothes, and came forward in princely attire, so handsome that the Princess had to bow to him. "I have learned to despise you," said he. "You would not have an honest prince, you did not value the rose and the nightingale, but you kissed a swineherd for a mere plaything; now you can do what you like." And so he went back into his kingdom, locked the door, and fastened the bolt. And she might stand outside and sing:

"Oh, my darling Augustine!  
All is lost, lost, lost!"



## THE SHEPHERDESS AND THE CHIMNEY SWEEP.

HAVE you ever seen a very old wooden cupboard, quite black with age, and carved with arabesques and foliage? Just such a cupboard stood in the parlor; it was a legacy from Grandmother, and it was carved from the top to bottom with roses and tulips. There were the most wonderful flourishes upon it, and between these projected little stags' heads. But in the middle of the cupboard there was carved the whole figure of a man. He was very funny to look at, for he was grinning—you could not call it laughing—and he had a goat's legs, little horns on his forehead, and a long beard. The little children in the room always called him Major-and-Lieutenant-General-War-Commander-Sergeant Billy-goat-legs; this was a very difficult name to pronounce, and there are not many who receive this title, but it was remarkable that he had been carved out at all. There he sat, always looking at the table under the mirror, upon which stood a pretty little Shepherdess made of porcelain. Her shoes were gilded, her skirt daintily trimmed at the side with a red bow, she wore a golden hat, and carried a shepherd's crook; she was indeed quite lovely!



Close beside her stood a little Chimney-Sweep, as black as a coal, but also made of porcelain. He was, however, just as clean and neat as any one else, for he only represented a chimney-sweep: the modeller might just as well have made him a prince.

There he stood with his ladder, looking very nice, with his face as white and pink as a girl's. This was really a fault, for he ought to have been just a little black. He was standing very close to the Shepherdess; they had been placed there, had become engaged to one another, and suited each other very well, for they were both young, both were made of the same porcelain, and both were equally brittle.

Close to them stood another figure, which was three times as big as they—an old Chinaman, who could nod his head. He also was made of porcelain, and pretended to be the grandfather of the little Shepherdess, but he could not prove it. He declared that he had authority over her, and he therefore nodded to the Major-and-Lieutenant-General-War-Commander Sergeant Billy-goat-legs, who was proposing to the little Shepherdess.

"There is a husband for you," said the old Chinaman, "a husband who, I believe, is made of mahogany, and who can make you Mrs. Major-and-Lieutenant-General-War-Commander-Sergeant Billy-goat-legs. He possesses a whole cupboard full of silver plate, besides what he has in the secret drawers."

"Oh, I do not want to get into that dark cupboard," said the little Shepherdess; "I have heard



them say that he has eleven porcelain wives in there!"

"Then you will be number twelve," answered the Chinaman; "to-night, when the old cupboard begins to creak, you shall get married, as true as I am a Chinaman," and he nodded his head, and fell asleep.

But the little Shepherdess wept, and looked at her heart's beloved, the porcelain Chimney-Sweep.

"I beg of you," said she, "to take me with you out into the wide world, for we cannot remain here."

"I will do whatever you like," said the little Chimney-Sweep; "let us go at once; I think I can maintain you by following my profession!"

"I wish we were safely down from the table," she said; "I shall never be happy until we are out in the wide world."

But he comforted her, and showed her where to put her little foot on the carved edge and gilt foliage of the table-leg. Then he brought his ladder to help her, and so they got down on to the floor. But when they looked toward the old cupboard, there was a fearful commotion; all the little carved stags stretched forth and craned their necks to and fro; Major - and - Lieutenant-General-War-Commander-Sergeant Billy-goat-legs sprang high in the air, and cried out to the old Chinaman: "They are running away! they are running away!" This frightened them, so they jumped hurriedly up into the drawer.

Here lay three or four packs of cards, but they were not complete, and there was also a little puppet-show, which was fixed up as well as it could







be. There was a performance at the theatre, and all the Queens—diamonds, hearts, clubs, and spades—were sitting in the front row fanning themselves with tulips, while behind them stood the Knaves, with heads both above and below, as is usual with playing-cards. The play was about two people who were crossed in love, and the little Shepherdess cried, because it was just like her own story.

“Oh, I cannot bear this,” said she; “I must get out of the drawer!” But when they reached the floor again, and looked up at the table, the old Chinaman was awake, and rocking his whole body to and fro, for his legs were only one big lump. “Now the old Chinaman is coming,” cried the little Shepherdess, and she fell down on her little porcelain knees, so frightened was she.

“I have an idea,” said the Chimney-Sweep; “let us creep down into the big potpourri-vase, which stands over in the corner; there we can lie on roses and lavender, and when he comes we can throw salt in his eyes.”

“That is of no use,” she said; “besides, the old Chinaman and the potpourri-vase were once engaged, and some little affection always remains when people have occupied that relation to one another. No, there is nothing for us to do but to go out into the wide world!”

“Have you really courage to go with me out into the wide world?” asked the Chimney-Sweep. “Have you considered how wide the world is, and that we can never come back here again?”



"I have," said she.

The Chimney-Sweep looked at her very earnestly, and said: "My way lies through the chimney; if you really have courage to creep with me through the stove and up through the pipe, we shall get up into the chimney. Then I shall know how to find my way; we can mount so high that they cannot catch us, and at the very top there is a hole leading into the wide world."

And he led her to the stove door.

"It looks very black there," she said; but she went with him through the stove and the pipe, although it was pitch dark.

"Now we are in the chimney," he said, "and look! look! up above a beautiful star is shining!"

It was a real star in the sky, shining straight down to them as if it wanted to show them their way. They clambered and scrambled up, and a terribly long way it was; but he lifted her up and helped her, holding her hand, and showing her the best places to put her little porcelain feet; and at last they reached the edge of the chimney. There they sat down, for they were very tired, and no wonder.

The sky, with all its stars, was high above them, and the roofs of the town were far below. They could see a long way around, far out into the world. The poor little Shepherdess had never dreamed that it would be like this, and she laid her little head on the shoulder of the Chimney-Sweep and wept so that the gold ran off her belt. "It is far too much,"



she said; "I cannot bear it; the world is too large. If only I were back again on the little table under the mirror! I shall never feel happy until I am there again. Now that I have followed you out into the wide world, you must take me home again, if you really love me."

The Chimney-Sweep tried to encourage her, reminding her of the old Chinaman and Major-and-Lieutenant - General - War - Commander - Sergeant Billy-goat-legs; but she sobbed so bitterly, and kissed her little Chimney-Sweep so tenderly, that he could not help yielding to her, though he knew it was foolish.

So they clambered down again through the chimney with great difficulty, crept through the pipe, which was not at all pleasant, and at last found themselves in the dark stove. Here they listened behind the door, to find out what was going on in the room. It was very quiet, so they peeped in. Alas! there in the middle of the floor lay the old Chinaman! He had fallen down from the table in pursuing them, and he lay there broken into three pieces. The back had broken off in one piece, and the head had rolled over into the corner; but Major - and - Lieutenant-General-War-Commander-Sergeant Billy-goat-legs stood in his usual place, lost in thought.

"This is dreadful," said the little Shepherdess; "old grandfather is broken to pieces, and it is our fault. I shall never survive it," and she wrung her tiny little hands.



"He can still be mended," said the Chimney-Sweep, "he can easily be mended, so pray calm yourself. When they have glued his back together, and given him a good rivet in his head, he will be as good as new again, and will yet live to tell us many disagreeable things."

"Do you think so?" she said; and they crept up on to the table where they had been standing before.

"We did not get very far," said the Chimney-Sweep; "we might have saved ourselves all that trouble."

"If only grandfather were riveted!" said the Shepherdess; "I wonder if it is dear?"

And riveted he was. The family had his back glued together, and they put a strong rivet in his neck, so that he was as good as new; but he could no longer nod.

"You have become very conceited since you were broken to pieces," said Major-and-Lieutenant-General-War-Commander-Sergeant Billy-goat-legs; "it seems to me that it is nothing to be proud of. Am I to have the Shepherdess, or am I not?"

The Chimney-Sweep and the little Shepherdess looked piteously at the old Chinaman. They were terribly afraid that he would nod; but he was unable to do this, and as it was disagreeable for him to tell a stranger that he had a rivet in his neck, the two little porcelain people were allowed to remain together. They blessed the old grandfather's rivet, and loved one another until they broke.



## THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL.

It was terribly cold; the snow was falling, and it began to grow dark, for the evening was coming on, and it was the last evening of the year—New Year's Eve. In the cold and darkness, a poor little girl, with bare head and naked feet, was walking along the street. She certainly had had slippers on when she left home, but of what use were they? They were large slippers—in fact, her mother had used them, so big were they; and the little girl had lost them when she ran across the street, for two big wagons came rattling by at a terrible rate. One of the slippers she couldn't find; and a little boy ran about with the other, saying that it would make a capital cradle when he had children of his own. So now the child walked along with her little naked feet, which were red and blue with cold. In an old apron she carried a number of matches, holding one bundle in her hand. Nobody had bought anything of her the whole day long, nobody had given her a single penny. Shivering with cold and hunger, she crept along, looking oh! so miserable, poor little thing! The snowflakes fell upon her long fair hair, that hung in pretty curls around her neck, but she did not think of this now.



By-and-by all the windows were lit up, and in the street there was a delicious smell of roast goose; for it was New Year's Eve—yes, she remembered that. In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sat down, huddling herself together. She drew her little legs up under her; but she grew colder still, and she dared not go home: for she had sold no matches—had not earned a single penny. Her father would beat her, and, besides, it was cold at home: they had nothing over them but the roof, through which the wind came whistling, although the largest holes were filled up with straw and rags. Her little hands were nearly dead with cold.

Ah! a match might do her some good, if only she could draw one out of the bundle and rub it against the wall, just to warm her fingers. She drew one out. Fizz! how it sputtered and burned; there was a warm flame, just like a tiny candle, as she held her hands over it; it was a wonderful little light. It seemed to the little girl that she sat in front of a large open stove, with polished brass feet and a brass cover. How beautifully the fire burned, and how warm it was! Ah! what was that?—the little one stretched out her tiny feet to warm them also; when suddenly the flame went out, the stove vanished, and she sat with the stump of a burnt match in her hand.

She struck a new one; it burned up, and as the light fell upon the wall, it became as transparent as a veil. She could see into a room where a table



was spread with a white table-cloth, and upon it stood a fine dinner service. What a savory smell came from the roast goose, stuffed with dried plums and apples! But, even more delightful, the goose jumped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor with a knife and fork in its beak, straight toward the little girl. Then the match went out, and there was nothing to be seen but the cold thick wall.

She lit another match, and saw a most beautiful Christmas-tree, larger and more richly bedecked than that which she had seen through the glass door at the rich merchant's last Christmas. Thousands of candles were shining from its green branches, and many-colored pictures, just like those shown in the shop windows, looked down upon her. The little girl stretched out both her hands, but the match went out.

The flames of the many Christmas candles rose higher and higher, and she saw that they were now twinkling stars. One of them fell, and left behind it a long streak of fire in the sky. "Now some one is dying," said the little one. Her old Grandmother, who was the only person who had been kind to her, and who was now dead, had once said: "When a star falls, a soul goes up to God."

She struck another match against the wall. It lit up everything around, and in the brightness, quite clearly and distinctly, stood her old Grandmother, looking upon her mildly and lovingly.

"Grandmother," cried the little one, "take me







with you! I know you will go when the match is burned out, and vanish like the warm stove, the delicious roast goose, and the big, beautiful Christmas tree," and she hastily struck the whole bundle of matches, wishing to hold her Grandmother fast. The matches shone with a radiance brighter than daylight; Grandmother had never before seemed so grand and so beautiful. She lifted the little girl in her arms, and they floated upward in joy and happiness, high, so very high, where there was no cold, no hunger, no sorrow. They were with God. But in the corner by the house sat the little girl in the cold morning light, with red cheeks and smiling lips—dead, frozen to death on the last evening of the Old Year!

New Year's morning dawned over the little dead child. There she sat, in the stiffness of death, still holding the matches, of which one bundle was nearly burned.

"She wanted to warm herself," they said. But no one knew what beautiful things she had seen—with what glory she had gone with her Grandmother into the happiness of the New Year.



## THE TINDER-BOX.

THERE came a soldier marching along the high-road—one, two! one, two! He had a knapsack on his back, and a sword by his side, for he had been in the wars, and now he was going home. On the way he met with an old witch; she was very hideous, and her under-lip hung down upon her breast. She said: "Good evening, soldier. What a fine sword you have, and what a big knapsack! You are a real soldier! You shall have as much money as you wish."

"Thank you, old witch," said the soldier.

"Do you see that big tree?" asked the witch, pointing to a tree that stood close by them. "It is quite hollow inside. You must climb to the top, and then you will see a hole, through which you can let yourself slide, so as to get deep down into the tree. I will tie a rope round your waist, so that I can pull you up again when you call out to me."

"What am I to do down in the tree?" asked the soldier.

"Fetch some money!" replied the witch. "When you get to the bottom of the tree you will see a large cave; it is quite light, for over a hundred lamps are burning there. Then you will see three



doors; these you can open, for the keys are in the key-holes. If you go into the first chamber, you will see a great chest in the middle of the floor; on this chest sits a dog, with eyes as big as a pair of tea-cups. But you need not care about that. I will give you my blue-checked apron, and you can spread it out upon the floor; then go up quickly and take the dog, and set him on my apron, open the chest, and take as many pence as you like. They are all copper. If you prefer silver, you must go into the second chamber; there sits a dog with a pair of eyes as big as mill-wheels. But you need not care about that. Set him upon my apron, and take some of the money. If you want gold, you can have that too—as much as you can carry—by going into the third chamber. But the dog that sits on the money-chest there has two eyes as big as the Round Tower.\* He is a fierce dog, to be sure; but you need not care about that. Only set him on my apron, and he won't hurt you; then take out of the chest as much gold as you like."

"That's not so bad," said the soldier. "But what am I to give you, old witch, for you will want something, too, I suppose?"

"No," replied the witch, "not a single shilling. You need only bring me an old Tinder-box which my grandmother forgot when she was down there last."

"Well, then, let me get the rope round my waist," said the soldier.

\* The Round Tower is a well-known tower in Copenhagen.



"Here it is," said the witch, "and here is my blue-checked apron."

And the soldier climbed up into the tree, let himself fall bump! down through the hole, and stood, as the witch had said, in the great cave, where over a hundred lamps were burning.

Now he opened the first door. Ugh! there sat the dog with eyes as big as tea-cups, staring at him.

"You're a fine fellow!" exclaimed the soldier; and he set him on the witch's apron, and took as many coppers as his pockets would hold; locked the chest, put the dog back on it again, and went into the second chamber. Aha! there sat the dog with the eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You should not stare so hard at me," said the soldier; "you might hurt your eyes." And he set the dog upon the witch's apron. And when he saw the many silver coins in the chest, he threw away all the coppers he had, and filled his pockets and his knapsack with silver.

Then he went into the third chamber. Oh, that was terrible! The dog in there really had two eyes as big as the Round Tower, and they turned round and round in his head like wheels.

"Good evening!" said the soldier, and touched his cap, for he had never seen such a dog before. When he looked at him a little more closely, he thought, "That will do," lifted him down on to the floor, and opened the chest. Good gracious! what a mass of gold! There was enough to buy the whole of Copenhagen, and all the cake-women's



sugar pigs, and all the tin soldiers, whips, and rocking-horses in the whole world. What a quantity of money there was, to be sure! Now the soldier threw away all the silver coins with which he had filled his pockets and his knapsack, and took gold instead. He filled all his pockets, his knapsack, his boots, and his cap, so that he could scarcely walk. Now indeed he had plenty of money. He put the dog on the chest, slammed the door, and called out through the tree: "Now pull me up, old witch."

"Have you the Tinder-box?" asked the witch.

"There!" exclaimed the soldier, "I have clean forgotten it."

And he went and fetched it.

The witch pulled him up, and he stood on the high-road again, with pockets, boots, knapsack, and cap full of golden coins.

"What are you going to with the Tinder-box?" he asked.

"That has nothing to do with you," replied the witch. "You have your money—now give me the Tinder-box."

"Nonsense!" said the soldier. "Tell me at once what you are going to do with it, or I will draw my sword and cut off your head!"

"No!" cried the witch.

So the soldier cut off her head. There she lay! And he tied up all his money in her apron, lifted it on to his back like a bundle, put the Tinder-box in his pocket, and went straight off to the town.



It was a splendid town! He put up at the very best inn, asked for the finest rooms, and ordered dishes that he liked, for he was now rich, and had plenty of money. The servant who had to clean his boots certainly thought them a remarkably old pair for such a rich gentleman; but he had not bought any new ones yet. The next day he ordered proper boots and handsome clothes. Now the soldier had become a fine gentleman. The people told him of all the splendor in their city, and about the King, and what a beautiful Princess the King's daughter was.

"Where is she to be seen?" asked the soldier.

"She is not to be seen at all," they all said; "she lives in a great copper castle, surrounded by many walls and towers. No one but the King may visit the castle, for it has been prophesied that she will marry a common soldier, and the King will not hear of this."

"I should like to see her," thought the soldier; but he was unable to get permission.

He now lived merrily, went to the theatre, drove in the King's garden, and gave large sums of money to the poor. This was very kind of him; but he knew from old times how hard it was to be penniless. Now he was rich, had fine clothes, and made many friends, who all said he was a good fellow and a true gentleman; and this pleased him. But as he spent money every day and never earned any, he had at last only twopence left; and he was obliged to move away from the fine rooms in which



he had dwelt, and live in a little garret just under the roof, where he had to clean his boots himself, and mend them with a darning-needle. None of his friends came to see him, for there were too many stairs to climb.

One evening it was quite dark, and he could not even buy himself a candle; but it occurred to him that there was a candle-stump in the Tinder-box which he had taken from the hollow tree into which the witch had helped him. He brought out the Tinder-box and the bit of candle; but as soon as he struck a light and the sparks flew from the flint, the door sprang open, and the dog with eyes as big as a pair of tea-cups, which he had seen in the tree, stood before him, and said—

“What does my lord order?”

“What?” exclaimed the soldier. “This is a famous Tinder-box indeed, if it can get me anything I want! Bring me some money!” said he to the dog; and whisk! the dog was gone, and whisk! he was back again, with a big bag full of coppers in his mouth.

Now the soldier knew what a splendid Tinder-box it was. If he struck it once, in came the dog who sat upon the chest of copper money; if he struck it twice, in came the dog who had the silver coins; and if he struck it three times, in came the dog who had the gold.

So the soldier moved back into the fine rooms, appeared in handsome clothes, and all his friends knew him again, and liked him very much indeed.







Then thought he to himself: "It is absurd that one cannot manage to see the Princess. They all say she is so beautiful; but what is the use of that, if she has always to sit in the great copper castle with the many towers? Is there no way I can get to see her? Ah—where is my Tinder-box?" So he struck a light, and whisk! came the dog with eyes as big as tea-cups.

"It is midnight, certainly," said the soldier, "but I should very much like to see the Princess, if only for a moment."

The dog was outside the door at once, and, before the soldier had time to think, he was back again with the Princess. She lay asleep on the dog's back, and was so beautiful that every one could see that she was a real Princess. The soldier could not help it; he was obliged to kiss her, for he was a real soldier. Then the dog ran back with the Princess.

But when the morning came, and the King and Queen were at breakfast, the Princess said she had dreamed a wonderful dream during the night. It was about a dog and a soldier. She had ridden upon the dog, and the soldier had kissed her.

"Well, that is a fine story," said the Queen. And one of the old maids-of-honor was set to watch the next night by the Princess's bed, to discover whether this was really a dream, or what else it might be.

The soldier had a great longing to see the lovely Princess again; so the dog came in the night, took



her away, and ran as fast as he could. But the old maid-of-honor put on water-boots, and ran just as fast after him. When she saw that they disappeared into a great house, she thought, "Now I know where it is," and with a bit of chalk she drew a big cross on the door.

Then she went home and went to bed, and the dog ran back with the Princess; but when he saw that there was a cross drawn on the door where the soldier lived, he took a piece of chalk too, and drew crosses on all the doors in the town. That was cleverly done, for now the maid-of-honor could not find the right door, as there were crosses on all of them.

In the early morning the King and the Queen came with the old maid-of-honor and all the officers of the Court, to see where the Princess had been.

"Here it is!" said the King, when he saw the first door with a cross upon it.

"No, my dear husband, it is here!" said the Queen, who saw another door with a cross on it.

"But there is one, and there is another!" they all cried, for wherever they looked there were crosses on the doors. So they saw at once that it would be useless to continue the search.

But the Queen was a very clever woman, who could do more than drive in a carriage. She took her great gold scissors, cut up a big piece of silk, and made a neat little bag; this she filled with fine buckwheat grain, and tied it on the Princess's back;



and when that was done, she cut a little hole in the bag, so that the grain would be scattered wherever the Princess went.

In the night the dog went again to the castle, took the Princess on its back, and ran with her to the soldier, who loved her very much, and who wished he was a prince, so that he could make her his wife. The dog did not notice how the grain was scattered the whole way from the castle to the soldier's window, where he ran up the wall with the Princess.

In the morning the King and the Queen easily discovered where their daughter had been, and they took the soldier and put him in prison.

There he sat. Ugh! How dark and miserable it was! And they said to him, "To-morrow you shall be hanged!" That was not a pleasant thing to hear, for he had left his Tinder-box at the inn. In the morning he saw, through the iron grating of the little window, how the people were hurrying out of the town to see him hanged. He heard the drums, and saw the soldiers marching. All the people were running out, and there was a shoemaker's boy with leathern apron and slippers, who ran so fast that one of his slippers flew off, and came right against the wall where the soldier sat peeping out through the iron grating.

"Hallo, you shoemaker's boy! you needn't be in such a hurry," cried the soldier to him; "it will not begin till I come. If you will run over to where I live, and bring me my Tinder-box, you







shall have fourpence, but you must put your best leg foremost."

The shoemaker's boy wished to earn the fourpence, so he hurried away to fetch the Tinder-box, and gave it to the soldier—and now we shall hear what happened.

Outside the town a large scaffold had been erected, and round it stood the soldiers and many hundreds of thousands of people. The King and Queen sat on a splendid throne opposite the judges and the whole Council.

The soldier was standing on the ladder; but as they were about to put the rope round his neck, he said it was usual to grant an innocent request before a poor criminal suffered punishment. He would so very much like to smoke a pipe of tobacco, for it would be the last pipe he would smoke in this world!

This the King could not refuse, so the soldier took his Tinder-box, and struck fire. One—two—three! and suddenly there stood all the dogs—the one with eyes as big as tea-cups, the one with eyes as large as mill-wheels, and the one whose eyes were as big as the Round Tower.

"Help me now, so that I may not be hanged!" said the soldier.

And the dogs fell upon all the judges and the whole of the Council, seized one by the legs, and another by the nose, and tossed them all yards into the air, so that they fell down, and were dashed to pieces.



“I won’t!” cried the King; but the biggest dog took both him and the Queen, and threw them after the others. Then the soldiers were frightened, and all the people cried, “Little soldier, you shall be our King, and marry the beautiful Princess!”

So they put the soldier into the King’s coach, and all the three dogs danced in front, and cried, “Hurrah!” and the boys whistled through their fingers, and the soldiers presented arms. The Princess came out from the copper castle, and became Queen, and this pleased her very well.

The wedding festivities lasted eight days, and the dogs sat at the table too, with their eyes wide open.



## THUMBELINA.

THERE was once a woman who wanted to have quite a tiny, little child, but she did not know where to get one from. So one day she went to an old Witch and said to her: "I should so much like to have a tiny, little child; can you tell me where I can get one?"

"Oh, we have just got one ready!" said the Witch. "Here is a barley-corn for you, but it's not the kind the farmer sows in his field, or feeds the cocks and hens with, I can tell you. Put it in a flower-pot, and then you will see something happen."

"Oh, thank you!" said the woman, and gave the Witch a shilling, for that was what it cost. Then she went home and planted the barley-corn; immediately there grew out of it a large and beautiful flower, which looked like a tulip, but the petals were tightly closed as if it were still only a bud.

"What a beautiful flower!" exclaimed the woman, and she kissed the red and yellow petals; but as she kissed them the flower burst open. It was a real tulip, such as one can see any day; but in the middle of the blossom, on the green velvety petals, sat a little girl, quite tiny, trim, and pretty. She was scarcely half a thumb in height; so they called







her Thumbelina. An elegant polished walnut-shell served Thumbelina as a cradle, the blue petals of a violet were her mattress, and a rose-leaf her coverlid. There she lay at night, but in the day-time she used to play about on the table; here the woman had put a bowl, surrounded by a ring of flowers, with their stalks in water, in the middle of which floated a great tulip petal, and on this Thumbelina sat, and sailed from one side of the bowl to the other, rowing herself with two white horse-hairs for oars. It was such a pretty sight! She could sing, too, with a voice more soft and sweet than had ever been heard before.

One night, when she was lying in her pretty little bed, an old toad crept in through a broken pane in the window. She was very ugly, clumsy, and clammy; she hopped on to the table where Thumbelina lay asleep under the red rose-leaf.

"This would make a beautiful wife for my son," said the toad, taking up the walnut-shell, with Thumbelina inside, and hopping with it through the window into the garden.

There flowed a great wide stream, with slippery and marshy banks; here the toad lived with her son. Ugh! how ugly and clammy he was, just like his mother! "Croak, croak, croak!" was all he could say when he saw the pretty little girl in the walnut-shell.

"Don't talk so loud, or you'll wake her," said the old toad. "She might escape us even now; she is as light as a feather. We will put her at once on



a broad water-lily leaf in the stream. That will be quite an island for her; she is so small and light. She can't run away from us there, whilst we are preparing the guest-chamber under the marsh where she shall live."

Outside in the brook grew many water-lilies, with broad green leaves, which looked as if they were swimming about on the water. The leaf farthest away was the largest, and to this the old toad swam with Thumbelina in her walnut-shell.

The tiny Thumbelina woke up very early in the morning, and when she saw where she was she began to cry bitterly; for on every side of the great green leaf was water, and she could not get to the land.

The old toad was down under the marsh, decorating her room with rushes and yellow marigold leaves, to make it very grand for her new daughter-in-law; then she swam out with her ugly son to the leaf where Thumbelina lay. She wanted to fetch the pretty cradle to put it into her room before Thumbelina herself came there. The old toad bowed low in the water before her, and said: "Here is my son; you shall marry him, and live in great magnificence down under the marsh."

"Croak, croak, croak!" was all that the son could say. Then they took the neat little cradle and swam away with it; but Thumbelina sat alone on the great green leaf and wept, for she did not want to live with the clammy toad, or marry her ugly son. The little fishes swimming about under



the water had seen the toad quite plainly, and heard what she had said; so they put up their heads to see the little girl. When they saw her, they thought her so pretty that they were very sorry she should go down with the ugly toad to live. No; that must not happen. They assembled in the water round the green stalk which supported the leaf on which she was sitting, and nibbled the stem in two. Away floated the leaf down the stream, bearing Thumbelina far beyond the reach of the toad.

On she sailed past several towns, and the little birds sitting in the bushes saw her, and sang, "What a pretty little girl!" The leaf floated farther and farther away; thus Thumbelina left her native land.

A beautiful little white butterfly fluttered above her, and at last settled on the leaf. Thumbelina pleased him, and she, too, was delighted, for now the toads could not reach her, and it was so beautiful where she was travelling; the sun shone on the water and made it sparkle like the brightest silver. She took off her sash, and tied one end round the butterfly; the other end she fastened to the leaf so that now it glided along with her faster than ever.

A great cockchafer came flying past; he caught sight of Thumbelina, and in a moment had put his arms round her slender waist, and had flown off with her to a tree. The green leaf floated away down the stream, and the butterfly with it, for he was fastened to the leaf and could not get loose



from it. Oh, dear! how terrified poor little Thumbelina was when the cockchafer flew off with her to the tree! But she was especially distressed on the beautiful white butterfly's account, as she had tied him fast, so that if he could not get away he must starve to death. But the cockchafer did not trouble himself about that; he sat down with her on a large green leaf, gave her the honey out of the flowers to eat, and told her that she was very pretty, although she wasn't in the least like a cockchafer. Later on, all the other cockchafers who lived in the same tree came to pay calls; they examined Thumbelina closely, and remarked, "Why, she has only two legs! How very miserable!"

"She has no feelers!" cried another.

"How ugly she is!" said all the lady chafers—and yet Thumbelina was really very pretty.

The cockchafer who had stolen her knew this very well; but when he heard all the ladies saying she was ugly, he began to think so too, and would not keep her; she might go wherever she liked. So he flew down from the tree with her and put her on a daisy. There she sat and wept, because she was so ugly that the cockchafer would have nothing to do with her; and yet she was the most beautiful creature imaginable, so soft and delicate, like the loveliest rose-leaf.

The whole summer poor little Thumbelina lived alone in the great wood. She plaited a bed for herself of blades of grass, and hung it up under a clover-leaf, so that she was protected from the rain;



she gathered honey from the flowers for food, and drank the dew on the leaves every morning. Thus the summer and autumn passed, but then came winter—the long, cold winter. All the birds who had sung so sweetly about her had flown away; the trees shed their leaves, the flowers died; the great clover-leaf under which she had lived curled up, and nothing remained of it but the withered stalk. She was terribly cold, for her clothes were ragged, and she herself was so small and thin. Poor little Thumbelina! she would surely be frozen to death. It began to snow, and every snowflake that fell on her was to her as a whole shovelful thrown on one of us, for we are so big, and she was only an inch high. She wrapt herself round in a dead leaf, but it was torn in the middle and gave her no warmth; she was trembling with cold.

Just outside the wood where she was now living lay a great corn-field. But the corn had been gone a long time; only the dry, bare stubble was left standing in the frozen ground. This made a forest for her to wander about in. All at once she came across the door of a field-mouse, who had a little hole under a corn-stalk. There the mouse lived warm and snug, with a store-room full of corn, a splendid kitchen and dining-room. Poor little Thumbelina went up to the door and begged for a little piece of barley, for she had not had anything to eat for the last two days.

“Poor little creature!” said the field-mouse, for she was a kind-hearted old thing at the bottom.



"Come into my warm room and have some dinner with me."

As Thumbelina pleased her, she said: "As far as I am concerned you may spend the winter with me; but you must keep my room clean and tidy, and tell me stories, for I like that very much."

And Thumbelina did all that the kind old field-mouse asked, and did it remarkably well too.

"Now I am expecting a visitor," said the field-mouse; "my neighbor comes to call on me once a week. He is in better circumstances than I am, has great, big rooms, and wears a fine black velvet coat. If you could only marry him, you would be well provided for. But he is blind. You must tell him all the prettiest stories you know."

But Thumbelina did not trouble her head about him, for he was only a mole. He came and paid them a visit in his black velvet coat.

"He is so rich and so accomplished," the field-mouse told her. "His house is twenty times larger than mine; he possesses great knowledge, but he cannot bear the sun and the beautiful flowers, and speaks slightingly of them, for he has never seen them."

Thumbelina had to sing to him, so she sang "Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home!" and other songs so prettily that the mole fell in love with her; but he did not say anything, he was a very cautious man. A short time before he had dug a long passage through the ground from his own house to that of his neighbor; in this he gave the field-mouse



and Thumbelina permission to walk as often as they liked. But he begged them not to be afraid of the dead bird that lay in the passage: it was a real bird with beak and feathers, and must have died a little time ago, and now laid buried just where he had made his tunnel. The mole took a piece of rotten wood in his mouth, for that glows like fire in the dark, and went in front, lighting them through the long dark passage. When they came to the place where the dead bird lay, the mole put his broad nose against the ceiling and pushed a hole through, so that the daylight could shine down. In the middle of the path lay a dead swallow, his pretty wings pressed close to his sides, his claws and head drawn under his feathers; the poor bird had evidently died of cold. Thumbelina was very sorry, for she was very fond of all little birds; they had sung and twittered so beautifully to her all through the summer. But the mole kicked him with his bandy legs and said:

"Now he can't sing any more! It must be very miserable to be a little bird! I'm thankful that none of my little children are; birds always starve in winter."

"Yes, you speak like a sensible man," said the field-mouse. "What has a bird, in spite of all his singing, in the winter-time? He must starve and freeze, and that must be very pleasant for him, I must say!"

Thumbelina did not say anything; but when the other two had passed on she bent down to the bird,







brushed aside the feathers from his head, and kissed his closed eyes gently. "Perhaps it was he that sang to me so prettily in the summer," she thought. "How much pleasure he did give me, dear little bird!"

The mole closed up the hole again which let in the light, and then escorted the ladies home. But Thumbelina could not sleep that night; so she got out of bed, and plaited a great big blanket of straw, and carried it off, and spread it over the dead bird, and piled upon it thistle-down as soft as cotton-wool, which she had found in the field-mouse's room, so that the poor little thing should lie warmly buried.

"Farewell, pretty little bird!" she said. "Farewell, and thank you for your beautiful songs in the summer, when the trees were green, and the sun shone down warmly on us!" Then she laid her head against the bird's heart. But the bird was not dead he had been frozen, but now that she had warmed him, he was coming to life again.

In autumn the swallows fly away to foreign lands; but there are some who are late in starting, and then they get so cold that they drop down as if dead, and the snow comes and covers them over.

Thumbelina trembled, she was so frightened; for the bird was very large in comparison with herself—only an inch high. But she took courage, piled up the down more closely over the poor swallow, fetched her own coverlid and laid it over his head.



Next night she crept out again to him. There he was alive, but very weak; he could only open his eyes for a moment and look at Thumbelina, who was standing in front of him with a piece of rotten wood in her hand, for she had no other lantern.

"Thank you, pretty little child!" said the swallow to her. "I am so beautifully warm! Soon I shall regain my strength, and then I shall be able to fly out again into the warm sunshine."

"Oh!" she said, "it is very cold outside; it is snowing and freezing! stay in your warm bed; I will take care of you!"

Then she brought him water in a petal, which he drank, after which he related to her how he had torn one of his wings on a bramble, so that he could not fly as fast as the other swallows, who had flown far away to warmer lands. So at last he had dropped down exhausted, and then he could remember no more. The whole winter he remained down there, and Thumbelina looked after him and nursed him tenderly. Neither the mole nor the field-mouse learnt anything of this, for they could not bear the poor swallow.

When the spring came, and the sun warmed the earth again, the swallow said farewell to Thumbelina, who opened the hole in the roof for him which the mole had made. The sun shone brightly down upon her, and the swallow asked her if she would go with him; she could sit upon his back. Thumbelina wanted very much to fly far away into the green wood, but she knew that the old field-



mouse would be sad if she ran away. "No, I mustn't come!" she said.

"Farewell, dear good little girl!" said the swallow, and flew off into the sunshine. Thumbelina gazed after him with the tears standing in her eyes, for she was very fond of the swallow.

"Tweet, tweet!" sang the bird, and flew into the green wood. Thumbelina was very unhappy. She was not allowed to go out into the warm sunshine. The corn which had been sowed in the field over the field-mouse's home grew up high into the air, and made a thick forest for the poor little girl, who was only an inch high.

"Now you are to be a bride, Thumbelina!" said the field-mouse, "for our neighbor has proposed for you! What a piece of fortune for a poor child like you! Now you must set to work at your linen for your dowry, for nothing must be lacking if you are to become the wife of our neighbor, the mole!"

Thumbelina had to spin all day long, and every evening the mole visited her, and told her that when the summer was over the sun would not shine so hot; now it was burning the earth as hard as a stone. Yes, when the summer had passed, they would keep the wedding.

But she was not at all pleased about it, for she did not like the stupid mole. Every morning when the sun was rising, and every evening when it was setting, she would steal out of the house-door, and when the breeze parted the ears of corn so that she could see the blue sky through them, she thought







how bright and beautiful it must be outside, and longed to see her dear swallow again. But he never came; no doubt he had flown away far into the great green wood.

By the autumn Thumbelina had finished the dowry.

"In four weeks you will be married!" said the field-mouse; "don't be obstinate, or I shall bite you with my sharp white teeth! You will get a fine husband! The King himself has not such a velvet coat. His store-room and cellar are full, and you should be thankful for that."

Well, the wedding-day arrived. The mole had come to fetch Thumbelina to live with him deep down under the ground, never to come out into the warm sun again, for that was what he didn't like. The poor little girl was very sad; for now she must say good-by to the beautiful sun.

"Farewell, bright sun!" she cried, stretching out her arms toward it, and taking another step outside the house; for now the corn had been reaped, and only the dry stubble was left standing. "Farewell, farewell!" she said, and put her arms round a little red flower that grew there. "Give my love to the dear swallow when you see him!"

"Tweet, tweet!" sounded in her ear all at once. She looked up. There was the swallow flying past! As soon as he saw Thumbelina, he was very glad. She told him how unwilling she was to marry the ugly mole, as then she had to live underground



where the sun never shone, and she could not help bursting into tears.

"The cold winter is coming now," said the swallow. "I must fly away to warmer lands: will you come with me? You can sit on my back, and we will fly far away from the ugly mole and his dark house, over the mountains, to the warm countries where the sun shines more brightly than here, where it is always summer, and there are always beautiful flowers. Do come with me, dear little Thumbelina, who saved my life when I lay frozen in the dark tunnel!"

"Yes, I will go with you," said Thumbelina, and got on the swallow's back, with her feet on one of his outstretched wings. Up he flew into the air, over woods and seas, over the great mountains where the snow is always lying. And if she was cold she crept under his warm feathers, only keeping her little head out to admire all the beautiful things in the world beneath. At last they came to warm lands; there the sun was brighter, the sky seemed twice as high, and in the hedges hung the finest green and purple grapes; in the woods grew oranges and lemons: the air was scented with myrtle and mint, and on the roads were pretty little children running about and playing with great gorgeous butterflies. But the swallow flew on farther, and it became more and more beautiful. Under the most splendid green trees beside a blue lake stood a glittering white marble castle. Vines hung about the high pillars; there were many swallows' nests,



and in one of these lived the swallow who was carrying Thumbelina.

"Here is my house!" said he. "But it won't do for you to live with me; I am not tidy enough to please you. Find a home for yourself in one of the lovely flowers that grow down there; now I will set you down, and you can do whatever you like."

"That will be splendid!" said she, clapping her little hands.

There lay a great white marble column which had fallen to the ground and broken into three pieces, but between these grew the most beautiful white flowers. The swallow flew down with Thumbelina, and set her upon one of the broad leaves. But there, to her astonishment, she found a tiny little man sitting in the middle of the flower, as white and transparent as if he were made of glass; he had the prettiest golden crown on his head, and the most beautiful wings on his shoulders; he himself was no bigger than Thumbelina. He was the spirit of the flower. In each blossom there dwelt a tiny man or woman; but this one was the King over the others.

"How handsome he is!" whispered Thumbelina to the swallow.

The little Prince was very much frightened at the swallow, for in comparison with one so tiny as himself he seemed a giant. But when he saw Thumbelina, he was delighted, for she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. So he took his golden crown from off his head and put it on hers, asking



her her name, and if she would be his wife, and then she would be Queen of all the flowers. Yes! he was a different kind of husband to the son of the toad and the mole with the black velvet coat. So she said "Yes" to the noble Prince. And out of each flower came a lady and gentleman, each so tiny and pretty that it was a pleasure to see them. Each brought Thumbelina a present, but the best of all was a beautiful pair of wings which were fastened on to her back, and now she too could fly from flower to flower. They all wished her joy, and the swallow sat above in his nest and sang the wedding march, and that he did as well as he could; but he was sad, because he was very fond of Thumbelina and did not want to be separated from her.

"You shall not be called Thumbelina!" said the spirit of the flower to her; "that is an ugly name, and you are much too pretty for that. We will call you May Blossom."

"Farewell, farewell!" said the little swallow with a heavy heart, and flew away to farther lands, far, far away, right back to Denmark. There he had a little nest above a window, where his wife lived, who can tell fairy-stories. "Tweet, tweet!" he sang to her. And that is the way we learnt the whole story.



## THE STORKS.

ON the last house in a little village stood a stork's nest. Mother Stork sat in it with her four young ones, who stretched out their heads with the sharp black bills, for these had not yet turned red. A little way off stood Father Stork, erect and stately on the ridge of the roof. He had drawn up one of his legs under him, so as to feel a little uncomfortable while he stood sentry. One might have fancied that he was carved out of wood, so still did he stand.

"It must appear very aristocratic," he thought, "for my wife to have a sentry standing by her nest. They can't know that it is her husband. They must think I have been ordered to stand here; how grand it looks!" So he continued to stand on one leg.

In the street below quite a number of children were playing, and when they caught sight of the storks, one of the boldest of the boys, and afterward all of them, sang an old rhyme about storks. But they only sang it just as they could remember it:—

"Stork, stork, fly away!  
Why stand on one leg all day?"



“Your wife is in her cosy nest,  
Where her four small children rest.

“They’ll hang one bird,  
And fry another,  
And shoot the third,  
And cook his brother.”

“Just listen to what those boys are saying!” said the little Stork children. “They say we are to be hanged and fried.”

“Never mind about that!” said Mother Stork. “If you don’t listen you won’t hear anything.”

But the boys went on singing, and pointing at the Storks; only one boy, whose name was Peter, said that it was a shame to tease the birds, and he would have nothing to do with it.

Mother Stork comforted her little ones.

“Never mind,” said she; “see how quietly your father stands, although he is only on one leg.”

“We are so frightened!” said the young Storks, and they drew their heads far into the nest.

The next day, when the children came out again to play, and saw the Storks, they sang their song:—

“They’ll hang one bird,  
And fry another.”

“Are we really to be hanged and eaten?” asked the young Storks.

“No, indeed!” said the mother. “You must



learn to fly; I will teach you; then we will go out into the meadows and pay a visit to the frogs. They will bow to us in the water, and sing 'Co—ax! co—ax!' and then we shall eat them up. That will be very enjoyable."

"And what then?" asked the young Storks.

"Then all the storks in the country will meet together, and begin the autumn manœuvres. By that time you must be able to fly well; that is a very important matter, for every stork who is unable to fly properly is killed by the general with his beak. You must therefore be careful and pay great attention when the drilling begins."

"Then we shall be killed after all, just as the boys say? Only listen—now they are saying it again."

"Listen to me, and not to them," said Mother Stork. "After the great manœuvres we shall fly to the warm countries, far away from here, over mountains and forests. We shall fly to Egypt, where there are three-cornered houses of stone which slope up to a point far above the clouds; they call them Pyramids, and they are older than any stork can imagine. There is a river which overflows its banks, and all the land is turned to mud. One walks about in the mud, and eats frogs."

"Oh!" cried all the young ones.

'Yes, it is a delightful place. We do nothing there all day long but eat; and while we are so comfortable over there, in this country not a green leaf is on the trees; it is so cold that the clouds







freeze to pieces, and fall down in little white fragments!"

It was the snow that she meant, but this was the best explanation she could give.

"And do the naughty boys also freeze to pieces?" asked the young Storks.

"No, they do not freeze to pieces, but they are not very far from it, and have to sit cowering in their dark rooms; whereas you are able to fly about in those foreign lands, where there are flowers and warm sunshine."

After some time the youngsters grew so big that they could stand upright in the nest and look far around. Father Stork came every day with delicious frogs, little snakes, and all the other stork dainties that he could find. Oh! what fun it was when he performed his tricks before them! He would lay his head quite back upon his tail, make a noise with his beak, as if it were a rattle; and then he told them stories, all about the marshes.

"Now listen! it is time that you learned to fly," said Mother Stork one day; and so the four little Storks had to get out on the ridge of the roof. Oh, how they tottered! how they balanced themselves with their wings!—and yet they were near falling.

"Now, just look at me!" said the Mother. "You must hold your heads like this! you must place your feet like this! One! two! one, two! That is what will help you on in the world."

Then she flew a little way, and the young ones



made a little clumsy leap. Bump!—there they lay, for their bodies were too heavy.

“I don’t want to fly!” said one of the little Storks, and he crept back into the nest; “I don’t care to go to the warm countries.”

“Then do you want to be frozen to death when the winter comes? Are the boys to come and hang you? Now, I will just call them!”

“Oh! no,” cried the little Stork, and he hopped out on to the roof again like the rest.

On the third day they could actually fly a little; so they thought they could rest on their wings in the air. But when they tried this—bump!—down they tumbled, and they had to flap their wings again. Now the boys came down the street, and sang their song:—

“Stork, stork, fly away!”

“Shall we fly down and peck out their eyes?” asked the young Storks.

“No; leave them alone,” replied the mother; “only listen to me, that is far more important. One, two, three!—now we fly round to the right. One, two, three!—now round to the left of the chimney! Yes, that was very good; the last flap with the wings was so neat and correct that I will give you permission to go to the marsh with me to-morrow! Several good Stork families go there with their youngsters. Let them see that you are the nicest, and that you can walk upright, for it looks well, and causes you to be respected.”



"But shall we not be revenged on those rude boys?" asked the young Storks.

"Let them scream as much as they like. You will fly up to the clouds, and go to the land of the Pyramids, when they will be left to shiver, and will not even have a green leaf or a sweet apple."

"Yes, we will revenge ourselves!" they whispered to one another; and so they again began practising.

Of all the boys down in the street, the one who most enjoyed singing the teasing song was he who had started it, and he was quite a little boy. He could hardly be more than six years old. The young Storks thought he was quite a hundred, for he was much bigger than their father and mother; and how should they know how old children and grown-up people were? They would be revenged at least upon this little boy, for it was he who had begun, and he always kept on. The young Storks were very angry; and as they grew bigger they were less inclined to bear it. At last their mother had to promise them that they should be revenged, but not until the day of their leaving the country.

"We must first see how you behave yourselves at the grand manœuvres. If you get through them badly, so that the general stabs you to the heart with his beak, the boys will be right—at least, in one way. Now let us see."

"Yes, you shall see," cried the young Storks; and then they took great pains. They practised



every day, and flew so swiftly and gracefully, that it was a pleasure to see them.

Now the autumn came on; all the Storks began to flock together, to fly away to countries where it is warm, while we have the winter here. Then came the manœuvres. They had to go over forests and villages, only to see how well they could fly, for it was a long journey that they had before them. The young Storks did so well that they got "Remarkably good, with frogs and snakes." That was the highest mark; and they were allowed to eat the frogs and snakes—so that is what they did.

"Now we will have our revenge!" they said.

"Yes, certainly!" said Mother Stork. "I have thought of the best plan. I know the pond in which all the tiny little human children lie till the Stork comes and brings them to their parents. The pretty little babies lie there sleeping, dreaming more sweetly than they will ever dream afterward. All parents are glad to have such a baby, and all children want a little sister or brother. Now we will fly to the pond, and fetch one for each of the children who has not sung the naughty song and made fun of the Storks."

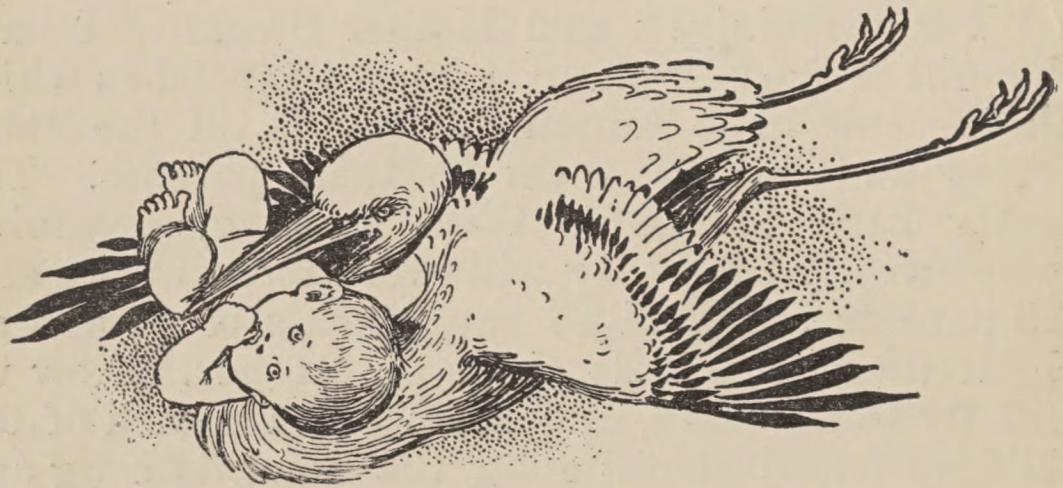
"But he who started singing—that naughty, ugly boy!" screamed the young Storks; "what shall we do to him?"

"There is a little dead baby in the pond, that has dreamed itself to death; we will bring that for him. Then he will cry, because we have brought him a little dead brother. But to that good boy—



you have not forgotten him—the one who said: ‘It is wrong to tease the birds!’—to him we will bring a brother *and* a sister. And as his name is Peter, all of you shall be called Peter too.”

And it happened as she said; all the Storks were called Peter, and that is their name to this day.





## THE BRAVE TIN SOLDIER.

THERE were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers, who were all brothers, for they were all born of the same old tin spoon. They carried their muskets on their shoulders, and looked straight in front of them; their uniform was red and blue, and very pretty indeed. The very first thing they heard in this world, when the lid was taken off the box, was the words, "Tin Soldiers!" for that is what a little boy cried, clapping his hands, as he saw them; they were given to him because it was his birthday, and he set them up on the table. All the soldiers were like each other except one, who was a little different; he had only one leg, for he was the last to be cast, and there was not enough tin; but he stood just as steadily on his one leg as the others on their two. And it was this one who became famous.

On the table, where they were all set up, a number of other toys were standing, but what first met the eye was a beautiful castle made of cardboard. Through the small windows you could see straight into the rooms; little trees were standing outside, around a little piece of looking-glass that represented a lake. Swans of wax were swimming there, and were reflected in it. This was very



pretty; but prettiest of all was a little maid who was standing at the open door of the castle; she also was cut out of cardboard, but she had a skirt of the finest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon over the shoulders like a sash, in the middle of which was a little bit of glittering tinsel as large as her whole face. The little maiden stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and she lifted one of her legs so high that the Tin Soldier could not see it at all, and thought that she had only one leg, like himself.

"That would be the wife for me," he thought, "but she is too aristocratic, and lives in a castle. I have only a box, and that belongs to the whole twenty-five of us. That is no place for her; but I would like to make her acquaintance all the same." So he laid himself down at full length behind a snuff-box where he could watch the little maid, standing on one leg without losing her balance.

Toward evening all the other tin soldiers were put into the box, and the people in the house went to bed. Then the toys began to play: paid visits, went to war, and gave balls. The tin soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to join in the fun, but they could not get the lid off. The nut-crackers were turning somersaults; the slate pencil was at work on the slate; and there was such a noise that the canary bird woke up and began to join in the chatter, but he spoke in verse. The only two who did not move from their places were the Tin Soldier and the little dancer. She was







standing straight up on the tip of her toe, with both arms stretched out, and the Tin Soldier stood just as firmly on his one leg, and did not take his eyes off her, even for a moment.

The clock struck twelve, when bang! off went the lid of the snuff-box. There was no snuff in it, but only a tiny black goblin, and a clever toy it was. "Tin Soldier," said the goblin, "please keep your eyes to yourself," but the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear. "Well, wait till to-morrow," said the goblin.

When the children came down in the morning, the Tin Soldier was put in the window, and whether it was the goblin or the draught that did it, all of a sudden the window flew up and the soldier fell head over heels from the third story. He came down at a terrible rate, and then he stuck upon his helmet, with his only leg straight up in the air, and his bayonet between the paving-stones. The servant and the little boy at once went down to find him, but they could not see him, although they nearly trod on him.

If the little Tin Soldier had cried, "Here I am," they might have found him, but he did not think it proper to call out loudly when he was in uniform.

Then it began to rain; the drops fell thicker and thicker, until it became a real downpour. When it was over two street boys came along. "Just look," said one, "here's a Tin Soldier; let us send him for a sail." So they made a little boat out of a newspaper, put the Tin Soldier in the middle, and



there he was, sailing down the gutter. Both the boys ran alongside and clapped their hands. Goodness me! what large waves there were in that gutter, and how strong the current was!—but then it had been a real downpour.

The paper boat was tossed up and down, and now and then it turned round and round, until the Tin Soldier was quite dizzy, but he was brave and didn't move a muscle; he just looked straight in front of him and shouldered his musket. All at once the boat drifted into a long drain-pipe, where it was just as dark as if he had been in his box. "Where am I going now?" he thought. "Yes, it must be the goblin's fault. Now, if only the little lady were here in the boat, I would not mind if it were twice as dark." Suddenly they came upon a big water-rat, who lived in the drain-pipe. "Have you a passport?" said the rat. "Let me have it." The Tin Soldier said not a word, and held his musket tighter than ever. Away went the boat, and the rat after it. Ugh! how he gnashed his teeth and called out to the straws and chips: "Stop him, stop him! he hasn't paid the toll, and hasn't shown his passport!" But the current grew stronger and stronger, and the Tin Soldier could now see daylight shining in at the end of the pipe. He also heard a roaring sound, which really might have frightened the boldest, for just where the gutter ended, the water poured out into a large canal, and this was just as dangerous for him as it would be for us to be carried over a great waterfall. He



was now so near it that he could not stop, so the boat swept out into the canal. The poor Tin Soldier stiffened himself as well as he could, and no one could say that he even moved an eyelid. The boat whirled round three or four times, filled with water to the very edge, and began to sink. The Tin Soldier stood up to the neck in water, and the boat sank deeper and deeper, the paper loosened more and more, until the water went over the Soldier's head. He thought of the charming little dancer, whom he would never see again, and in his ears sounded the words of the song:—

“Oh, warrior bold, good by!  
Thy end, alas! is nigh.”

Then the paper burst, the Tin Soldier fell through, and was at once gobbled up by a big fish. Oh! how dark it was in there, even worse than in the drain-pipe, and there was so little room; but the Tin Soldier was brave, and lay at full length with his musket on his shoulder. The fish darted about in the most alarming way; then it lay quite still; but suddenly there was a flash like lightning; the daylight again appeared, and some one cried, “Tin Soldier!” The fish had been caught, taken to the market, sold, and brought to the kitchen, where the cook cut it up with a big knife. She took the Soldier by the waist with her two fingers and marched him into the sitting-room, where they all wanted to see such a remarkable man who had been







travelling about in the inside of a fish. The Tin Soldier wasn't at all proud. They stood him up on the table, and there!—what curious things do happen in the world!—the Tin Soldier was in the very same room in which he had been before! He saw the same children, and the same toys were standing on the table, the pretty castle and the lovely little dancer, and she was still standing on one leg whilst the other was high up in the air. He looked at her, and she looked at him; but they said nothing. Then one of the little boys took the Soldier and threw him into the fireplace; he did not give any reason for doing this; it must have been the fault of the goblin in the snuff-box. The Tin Soldier was quite lit up, and felt a great heat, but whether from the fire or from love he did not know.

The colors were clean gone; whether this had happened from his travels or from grief no one could tell. He looked at the little maiden and she looked at him; he felt that he was melting, but he stood there bravely and shouldered his musket. Suddenly the door flew open, the draught took hold of the dancer, and she flew like a sylph straight into the fireplace to the Tin Soldier, blazed up into a flame, and was gone. The Tin Soldier melted into a lump, and when the servant-maid took out the ashes next day she found him transformed into a little tin heart. Of the dancer nothing was left but the little bit of tinsel, which was burnt as black as a cinder.



## OLE LUK-OIE.

IN the whole world there is nobody who knows so many stories as Ole Luk-Oie. *He really can* tell stories.

It is in the evening, when the children are sitting at table, that Ole Luk-Oie comes. Softly he creeps up the stairs, for he walks in socks; opens the door very gently, and squirts sweet milk in the children's eyes—whisk! just a tiny drop, but quite enough to prevent them from keeping their eyes open; and so they cannot see him.

Then he steals just behind them, and blows softly at the back of their necks, so that their heads become heavy. But of course it does not hurt them, for Ole Luk-Oie is fond of the children, and only wants them to be quiet. They are most quiet when they are in bed; and they have to be very quiet indeed when Ole Luk-Oie tells them his stories.

When the children are nearly asleep, Ole Luk-Oie seats himself upon the bed. He is neatly dressed: his coat is of silk,, but it is impossible to say of what color, for it shines green, red, and blue, according to which side he turns. Under each arm he carries an umbrella. One is lined with pictures, and this he spreads over the good children, so that



they dream the most beautiful stories the whole night through; but on the other umbrella there are no pictures, and this he holds over the naughty children, so that they sleep heavily, and when they awake in the morning they have not dreamed at all.

We shall now hear how Ole Luk-Oie came every evening for a whole week to a little boy named Hjalmar, and what he told him. There are seven stories, one for every day in the week.

### MONDAY.

"Listen," said Ole Luk-Oie in the evening, when he had put Hjalmar to bed; "I will now start decorating."

And all the flowers of the flower-pots became great trees, stretching out their long branches under the ceiling of the room and along the walls, so that the whole room looked like a most beautiful green-house. All the twigs were covered with flowers, each of which was prettier than a rose, and very fragrant, and if you could have tasted it, it would have seemed sweeter than jam. The fruit glittered like gold, and there were buns, bursting with raisins. It was marvellous! But all of a sudden dismal groans came from the drawer in the table, where Hjalmar's school-books lay.

"Now, what can that be?" said Ole Luk-Oie, and he went to the table, and opened the drawer. It was the slate which was cracking with distress,







for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that it was nearly falling to pieces. The slate-pencil jumped and tugged at its string, as if it had been a little dog; it wanted to correct the sum, but it could not.

Then came a moan from Hjalmar's copy-book: that also was wailing—it was terrible to hear. All the way down each page the capitals stood in a row, one underneath the other, each with a smaller letter at its side—that was the copy; but besides these there were a few more letters who thought they looked just like the copy—they were the letters which Hjalmar had written. But they were lying down, just as if they had tumbled over the pencil line on which they were to stand.

"Look—this is how you should hold yourselves," said the copy, "sloping a little and with a bold swing."

"Oh, we should very much like to," said Hjalmar's letters; "but we cannot—we are too poorly."

"Then you must take some medicine," said Ole Luk-Oie.

"Oh, no!" they cried; and then they stood up so gracefully that it was a pleasure to look at them.

"Well, now we cannot have any more stories," said Ole Luk-Oie, "for I must exercise them. One, two! one, two!" So he drilled the letters until they stood quite gracefully, and were as good as any copy could be. But when Ole Luk-Oie went away, and Hjalmar looked at them the next morning, they were quite as wretched as ever.



## TUESDAY.

As soon as Hjalmar was in bed, Ole Luk-Oie touched every piece of furniture in the room with his little magic squirt, and all began to chatter and talk about themselves. Only the cuspidore was silent; it was vexed that they should be so vain as to speak and think only of themselves, without any regard for it, although it stood so modestly in the corner, for everybody's use.

Over the chest of drawers hung a large picture in a gilt frame; it was a landscape. One could see tall old trees, and flowers in the grass; there was a great lake, and a river that flowed round the forest, past many castles, and far out into the wide sea.

Ole Luk-Oie touched the painting with his magic squirt, and the birds in it began to sing, the branches of the trees moved, and the clouds floated along; one could see their shadows glide over the landscape. Then Ole Luk-Oie lifted little Hjalmar up to the frame, and Hjalmar put his feet into the picture, right into the high grass; and there he stood, while the sun shone upon him through the branches of the trees. He ran to the water, and seated himself in a little boat, which lay there; it was painted red and white, and the sails gleamed like silver. Six swans, wearing golden circlets round their necks, and twinkling blue stars on their heads, drew the boat past the great forest, where the trees told of robbers and witches, and the flowers spoke



of graceful little elves, and of what the butterflies had said to them.

Gorgeous fishes, with scales like silver and gold, swam after the boat, sometimes springing high into the air and falling back with a splash into the water; the birds, blue and red, large and small, flew after them in two long lines; the gnats danced, and the cockchafers said, "Boom! boom!" They all wanted to follow Hjalmar, and each one had a story to tell.

It was really a beautiful voyage. At one time the forests were thick and dark, at another they looked like a glorious garden full of sunlight and flowers. There were great palaces of glass and marble; on the balconies stood Princesses, and they were all little girls whom Hjalmar knew well—he had played with them before. Each one stretched forth her hand, and held out the prettiest sugar pig that a cake-woman could sell. Hjalmar took hold of one end of the sugar pig as he passed by, but the Princess also held fast, so that each of them got a piece—she the smaller part, and Hjalmar the larger.

Before each palace stood little Princes as sentries. They presented arms with golden swords, and then it rained raisins and tin soldiers; they were real Princes. At one moment Hjalmar was sailing through forests, at another through great halls, or straight through the middle of a town. At last he came to the town of his old nurse, who had carried him in her arms when he was quite a little boy, and who had always been so fond of him.



She nodded and beckoned, and sang the pretty verses she had composed and sent to Hjalmar:—

“To thee, sweet child, my thoughts still turn,  
My little Hjalmar ever dear;  
I think how often I have kissed  
From thy bright eyes a glistening tear.  
I heard them first, thy faltering words:  
Alas! ‘Farewell’ I had to say;  
God bless thee, dear, and keep thee safe,  
And guide thee always on thy way!”

And all the birds sang too, the flowers danced on their stalks, and the old trees nodded, just as if Ole Luk-Oie had been telling stories to them.

#### WEDNESDAY.

How the rain was streaming down outside! Hjalmar could hear it in his sleep; and when Ole Luk-Oie opened the window, the water reached up to the window-sill. There was a lake outside, and a beautiful ship was moored to the house.

“If you will sail with me,” said Ole Luk-Oie, “you may visit foreign countries to-night, and return again in the morning.”

Then suddenly Hjalmar stood in his Sunday clothes on the noble ship, and the weather immediately became fine. They sailed through the streets, round by the church; and on every side was the wide sea. On and on they sailed, until no



land was in sight, and they saw a flock of storks, which had also come from home, and was now travelling to the warm countries. The storks flew one behind the other; and in this way they had already travelled far, very far! One of them was so tired that his wings would scarcely carry him farther; he was the very last in the row, and had lagged a great deal behind the rest. At last he sank, with outspread wings, lower and lower; he made a few more strokes, but his efforts were useless; and at last he touched the rigging of the ship with his feet, then glided down the sail, and—bump! there he stood upon the deck. The cabin-boy took him and put him into the fowl-house, with the fowls, ducks, and turkeys; the poor stork stood among them quite perplexed.

“Just look at that fellow!” said all the fowls.

The turkey-cock swelled himself up as much as he could, and asked the stork who he was; while the ducks walked backwards, and nudged one another, saying, “Quack! quack!”

The stork told them of torrid Africa, of the Pyramids, and of the ostrich which runs like a wild horse across the desert; but the ducks could not understand what he meant, and they nudged one another, saying: “We are all of opinion that he is a stupid fellow.”

“Well, of course he is stupid,” said the turkey-cock; and he gobbled.

Then the stork stood quite silent, thinking of Africa.



Those legs of yours are very thin," said the turkey-cock. "What do they cost a yard?"

"Quack! quack! quack!" grinned all the ducks; but the stork pretended not to hear them.

"You might just as well laugh too," said the turkey-cock, "for that was a very witty remark. Perhaps it was too witty for you? Well, that fellow is not very smart; let us continue to entertain one another." And then the fowls cackled, and the ducks said, "Quack! quack! quack! quack!" It was wonderful how much fun they had among themselves.

But Hjalmar went to the fowl-house, opened the door, and called to the stork; which hopped out to him on to the deck.

By this time he had rested, and it seemed as if he nodded at Hjalmar, to thank him. Then he spread his wings and flew away to the warm countries; but the fowls cackled, the ducks quacked, and the turkey-cock became fiery red in the face.

"To-morrow we shall make soup of you," said Hjalmar; and then he awoke to find himself lying in his little bed.

Ole Luk-Oie had taken him for a wonderful journey that night.

#### THURSDAY.

I will tell you something," said Ole Luk-Oie.  
"Don't be afraid, I will show you a little mouse,"  
and he held out his hand with the pretty little crea-



ture. "It has come to invite you to a wedding. Two little mice are going to be married to-night. They live under the floor of your mother's pantry; it is said to be such a nice place to live in!"

"But how can I get through the little mouse-hole in the floor?" asked Hjalmar.

"I will see to that," said Ole Luk-Oie. "I can manage to make you small enough."

And with his magic squirt he touched Hjalmar, who at once began to grow smaller and smaller, until at last he was scarcely as big as a finger.

"Now you can borrow the tin soldier's uniform; I think it will fit you; it looks well to wear uniform when one is in society."

"Of course," said Hjalmar.

And in a moment he was dressed like the smartest of tin soldiers.

"Will you be so kind as to take a seat in your mamma's thimble?" said the mouse; "I shall then have the honor of drawing you."

"Oh, dear! are you going to take this trouble yourself, little miss?" said Hjalmar.

Then they drove to the mouse's wedding. They passed first through a long passage beneath the floor, which was only just high enough to drive through in a thimble; and the whole passage was lit up with phosphorescent wood.

"Doesn't it smell nice here?" said the mouse, who was drawing the thimble. "The whole passage has been greased with bacon fat; it could not be more exquisite."







Then they came into the bridal hall. On the right hand stood all the little lady mice; and they whispered and giggled as if they were making fun of one another; on the left stood all the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their fore-paws; and in the centre of the hall you could see the bride and bridegroom, standing in a hollow cheese, and kissing one another terribly before all the guests; for it had been a long engagement, and now they were about to be married.

More and more guests arrived, until the mice were nearly treading one another to death. The bridal pair had stationed themselves just in the doorway, so that one could neither come in nor go out. Like the passage, the floor had been greased with bacon fat, and that was the whole of the feast; but for dessert they produced a pea on which a mouse belonging to the family had bitten the name of the bridal pair—that is to say, the first letter of the name: it was something quite extraordinary.

All the mice said it was a beautiful wedding, and that the entertainment had been very enjoyable.

So Hjalmar drove home again. He had been in very distinguished society; but he had been obliged to shrink together to make himself small, and to put on the tin soldier's uniform.



## FRIDAY.

"It is wonderful how many grown-up people there are who would be glad to get hold of me!" said Ole Luk-Oie; "especially those who have done something wrong. 'Good little Ole,' they say to me, 'we cannot close our eyes: we lie the whole night and see all our evil deeds, which sit on the bedstead like ugly little goblins, and squirt hot water over us; do please come and drive them away, so that we may have a good sleep—we should really be glad to pay for it. Good-night, Ole; the money lies on the window-sill.' But I won't do it for money," said Ole Luk-Oie.

"What are we going to do to-night?"

"Well, I don't know if you care to go to another wedding again to-night. It is different from yesterday's; your sister's big doll, the one that looks like a man, and is called Hermann, is going to marry the doll Bertha. Besides, it is the doll's birthday, and there will be a great many presents."

"Yes, I know all about that," replied Hjalmar. "Whenever the dolls want new clothes, my sister lets them either keep their birthdays or have a wedding; it has happened at least a hundred times."

"Yes, but to-night is the hundred-and-first wedding; and when the hundred-and-first is over, it is all over; and that is why this one will be so splendid. Jusk look!"

And Hjalmar looked at the table. There stood



the little cardboard house with the windows illuminated, and in front of it all the tin soldiers were presenting arms. The bride and bridegroom sat on the floor, leaning against the leg of the table; they were quite thoughtful, as they had good reason to be. And Ole Luk-Oie, dressed up in the grandmother's black gown, married them to each other.

When the ceremony was over, all the pieces of furniture joined in the following pretty song, which the lead-pencil had written. It went to the tune of the soldiers' tattoo:—

“Our song like rustling winds shall sound  
To the bridal pair, who now have bound  
Their future fates together;  
With a hip, hurrah! from every side,  
And a merry cheer for groom and bride,  
Though they're only made of leather!”

And then came the presents, but they declined to accept anything eatable, for they were to live on love.

“Shall we go to a country-house or travel abroad?” asked the bridegroom.

So the swallow, who had travelled much, and the old hen in the yard, who had brought up five broods of chickens, were both consulted.

The swallow told them of the beautiful warm countries, where the air is mild, and the mountains glowed with colors that are quite unknown here.

“But have you not met our Savoy cabbage?” said the hen. “I was lying one summer in the country



with all my little ones: there was a gravel-pit, in which we could go about and scratch, and we also had admission to a garden full of Savoy cabbages. Oh! how green it was! I cannot imagine anything prettier."

"But one cabbage-stalk resembles another," said the swallow, "and we often have bad weather here."

"Oh! one gets used to that," said the hen.

"But it is cold here, and it sometimes freezes."

"That is good for the cabbage," said the hen.

"Besides, do we not also have warm weather? Four years ago did we not have a summer that lasted for five weeks? It was so hot here that one could scarcely breathe. And then in this country we have no poisonous animals, such as they have out there, and we are free from robbers. He is a villain who does not consider our country the most beautiful—he certainly does not deserve to be here!" And then the hen wept, and went on: "I also have travelled; I rode over twelve miles in a coop—there is no pleasure at all in travelling!"

"Yes; the hen is a sensible woman," said the doll Bertha. "I don't think anything of travelling among mountains, for it is only going up and coming down. No; we will move out to the gravel-pit and take a walk in the cabbage-garden."

And so it was settled.



## SATURDAY.

"Am I to hear any more stories now?" asked little Hjalmar, as soon as Ole Luk-Oie had put him to bed.

"We have no time for that this evening," said Ole Luk-Oie; and he spread his finest umbrella over the child. "Now look at these Chinamen."

And the whole umbrella looked like a great china bowl, with blue trees and painted bridges, upon which stood little Chinamen, nodding their heads.

"We must have the whole world nicely cleaned up for to-morrow morning," said Ole, "for it is a holiday—it is Sunday. I must go to the church-steeple to see that the little church goblins are polishing the bells, so that they may sound sweetly. I must go out into the fields, and see that the winds are blowing the dust from the grass and leaves; and—this is the greatest work of all—I must bring down all the stars to polish them. I have to number each one of them before I take them in my apron, and the holes in which they are fixed up there must be numbered as well, so that they may be put back in their right places, or they would not stick firmly, and then we should have too many shooting-stars, for they would be dropping down one after the other!"

"Do you know, Mr. Luk-Oie," said an old portrait, which hung on the wall in the room where Hjalmar slept, "that I am Hjalmar's great-grand-



father? I am much obliged to you for telling the boy stories; but you must not confuse his ideas. The stars cannot be taken down and polished. They are spheres, just like our earth, and that is just the best thing about them."

"I thank you, old grandfather," said Ole Luk-Oie, "I thank you! You are the head of the family, the ancestral head: but I am older than you! I am an old heathen; the Romans and Greeks called me the Dream God. I have been in the noblest houses, and am admitted there still. I know how to act with great people and with small. Now you can tell *your* story!"

And Ole Luk-Oie took his umbrella, and went away.

"Well, nowadays, it seems, one may not even give an opinion," grumbled the old portrait.

And Hjalmar awoke.

### SUNDAY.

"Good morning," said Ole Luk-Oie.

Hjalmar nodded, and then he ran and turned his great-grandfather's portrait against the wall, so that it might not interrupt them, as it had done yesterday.

"Now you must tell me stories about the 'five green peas that lived in a pea-pod,' and about 'the cock's foot that courted the hen's foot,' and 'the darning-needle whose manners were so fine that she thought herself a sewing-needle.'"



"One may have too much of a good thing," said Ole Luk-Oie. "You know that I prefer to show you something! I will show you my brother. His name also is Ole Luk-Oie, but he never comes to anybody but once; those to whom he comes he takes upon his horse, and tells them stories. He only knows two: one is so exceedingly beautiful that no one in the world can imagine it; but the other is so horrible and dreadful that it cannot be described."

And then Ole Luk-Oie lifted little Hjalmar up to the window, and said—

"There you can see my brother, the Ole Luk-Oie. They also call him Death! Do you see: he does not look so terrible as they make him in the picture-books, where he is only a skeleton. No; it is silver embroidery that he has on his coat; he wears a most beautiful hussar's uniform; and a mantle of black velvet flies behind him over the horse. See how he gallops along!"

And Hjalmar saw how this Ole Luk-Oie rode along, taking upon his horse young people and old.

Some of them he put in front of him, and some behind; but he always asked first—

"How stands the mark-book?"

"Well," they all replied.

"Yes?—let me see it myself," he said.

Then each one had to show him the book, and those who had "Very well," and "Remarkably well," written in their books, were placed in front on his horse, and the pretty story was told to them; while those who had "Middling," or "Tolerably



well," had to sit behind and hear the hideous one. They trembled and wept, and wanted to jump off the horse, but this they could not do, for they were stuck fast.

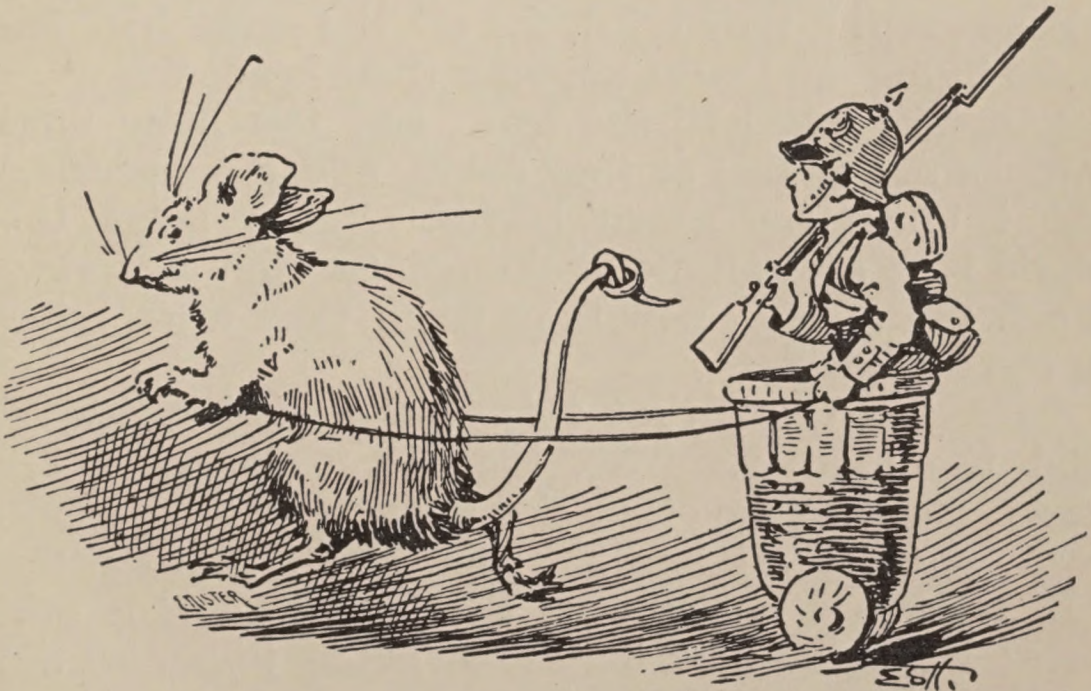
"Death is a most beautiful Ole Luk-Oie," said Hjalmar. "I am not afraid of him!"

"Nor need you be," said Ole Luk-Oie; "but see that you have a good mark-book!"

"Yes, there is something to learn in that," muttered the great-grandfather's portrait. "It *is* of some use to give one's opinion."

And so he was satisfied.

That, you see, is the story of Ole Luk-Oie; he may perhaps tell you some more himself, to-night.





## THE UGLY DUCKLING.

It was beautiful out in the country, for it was summer-time. The cornfields were yellow, the oats were green, the hay was put up in stacks. In the bright sunshine lay an old country-seat. It was as wild a spot as the farthest depths of the forest; and here sat a duck on her nest. She had nearly hatched out her little ones, but she was growing tired, for it had taken her a long time. At last one egg after the other began to crack. "Peep-peep!" they cried, for all the yolks had become living, and were popping their heads out.

"Quack! quack!" she said, and the little ones hurried out as fast as they could, and went peering about under the green leaves. "How large the world is!" said all the ducklings, for they had very much more room now than when they were lying in the egg-shells.

"Do you think that this is the whole world?" said the mother. "No, indeed; it stretches far away, right to the other side of the garden. I suppose you are all here?" she asked, getting up. "No, they are not all out: the biggest egg is still here; I wonder how long it is going to be?—I am getting tired of it," and then she sat down again.



"Well, how are you getting on?" said an old duck who came to pay her a visit.

"This egg takes such a long time," said the duck who was sitting. "It will not crack; but you should see all my little ducklings. They are the prettiest little mites that ever were seen—but they are all like their father—the good-for-nothing who never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg that will not crack," said the old duck. "Let me see the egg.—Yes; it must be a turkey's egg; you should leave it alone and teach the other children to swim."

"Well, I will just sit a little while longer on it," said the duck; "I have been sitting so long, I may just as well sit out the regulation time of the Zoological Gardens."

"Just as you please," said the old duck.

At last the large egg cracked. "Peep! peep!" said the young one, as he waddled out.

The duck looked at him. "Well, this is a terribly big Duckling," she said; "none of the others look like him; can it really be a young turkey? Well, we shall soon see. Into the water he must go, even if I have to push him in myself."

The next day was bright and beautiful, and the mother with the whole family went down to the canal. Splash! down she went into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and one duckling after the other tumbled in. The water went over their heads, but they soon came up again, and swam capitably, their legs seeming to move of themselves.



They were all in the water, even the ugly gray Duckling.

"No, this is not a turkey," she said; "see how nicely he uses his legs, how gracefully he carries himself. He is my own child; in fact, he is rather handsome when you come to look at him. Quack! quack! now come along with me, and I will take you out into the world, and introduce you to the poultry-yard."

But all the other ducks in the yard looked at them, and said quite distinctly: "Well, now we are going to have this new lot, too—as if there were not enough of us already. Oh! look at that ugly Duckling—we won't stand him!" And one of the ducks flew at him and bit him.

"Let him alone," said his mother; "he is not doing any harm to any one."

"But he is so big and uncommon," said the duck that had bitten him; "so he must be knocked about a little."

"Those children of yours are very pretty, mother," said the old duck with the red rag round her leg. "They are all pretty, except one; he is a failure."

"I dare say he will grow handsome in time, and no doubt he will get smaller. He has been lying too long in the egg; that is why his shape is not quite right." So she scratched his neck and stroked him all over.

"The other ducklings are pretty enough," said the old duck; "just make yourself at home."







So they made themselves at home; but the poor Duckling that came out of the last egg, and looked so ugly, was beaten, knocked about, and sneered at by the ducks and the fowls. "He is too big," they all said, and the turkey-cock, puffed himself out like a ship in full sail, and went straight up to the duckling and gobbled until he was quite red in the face. The poor Duckling did not know whether to stand still or walk away. He felt quite miserable, because he was so ugly.

Thus the first day went by, and afterward it became worse and worse. The poor duckling was driven about by every one; even his brothers and sisters were angry with him, and said frequently: "If only the cat would take you, you silly thing!" And the mother duck said: "If only you were far away!" And the ducks bit him, and the chickens pecked at him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked at him with her foot. One day he flew over the fence, and even the little birds in the bush were frightened away. "It is because I am so ugly," thought the Duckling, and he shut his eyes; but he ran on all the same, until he came to the big moor where the wild ducks lived.

"Where do you come from?" they asked. "You are uncommonly ugly," said the wild ducks, "but that is no matter, so long as you don't marry into our family."

Poor thing! he had no thought of getting married; if only they would allow him to lie in the rushes and drink a little of the marsh water.



“Look here,” they said, “you are so ugly that we have taken a fancy to you. Would you like to come along with us and become a bird-of-passage? On the next moor, not far from here, there are some lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and they can all say ‘hiss! hiss!’ Although you are so ugly, it would be a chance of making your fortune.”

Bang! bang! sounded in the air; the two ganders fell down amongst the rushes, and the water became blood-red. Again came the sound—bang! bang! and the whole flock of wild geese flew up from the reeds. Then there was another report. It was a large shooting party, and the sportsmen were lying all round the moor, while some of them were sitting on the branches of trees that overhung the rushes. The blue smoke rose in clouds through the dark trees and floated away across the water.

It was late in the day before things began to get quiet, but the poor Duckling did not dare to move. He waited for several hours before he began to look around, and then he hurried away from the moor as fast as he could. Over fields and meadows he ran, but as it was windy it was difficult for him to get along. Toward evening he reached a humble little cottage; it was so dilapidated that it did not know on which side to fall, and therefore it continued to stand up.

The wind was whistling around the Duckling, and he was obliged to sit down in order not to be blown away. The weather was getting worse and worse, when he suddenly noticed that the door of



the cottage had broken away from one of its hinges, and hung so crookedly that he could just creep through the crack into the room.

Here lived an old woman with her Cat and her Hen. The Cat, which she called Sonny, could arch his back, and purr, and could even give out sparks, but only when you stroked him the wrong way. The Hen had small stumpy legs, and therefore they called her Chick-a-biddy Shortshanks. She laid plenty of eggs, and the old woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange Duckling was at once discovered, and the Cat began to purr and the Hen to cackle.

"What is the matter?" said the old woman, peering around, and as she did not see well, she thought that the Duckling was a fat duck that had gone astray. "This is a capital find," she thought; "now I shall have ducks' eggs, if only it is not a drake—but that we must find out." So the Duckling was put on a trial for three weeks, but no eggs came.

The Cat was master of the house and the Hen was mistress, and so they always said: "We and the world"; for they considered that they were half the world, and the better half. The Duckling thought that others might have a different opinion, but the Hen would not agree with this. "Can you lay eggs?" she asked. "No—well, then, you will have to hold your tongue."

And the Cat said: "Can you arch your back, or







purr, or give out sparks? No—well, then, you must not have an opinion when other people talk”; and the Duckling sat in a corner in a bad temper. Then he began to think of the fresh air and the sunshine, and felt a strange longing to fly out over the water. At last he could keep it to himself no longer: he had to tell the Hen about it.

“What is the matter with you?” she said; “you have nothing to do—that is why you get such fancies into your head. If you could lay an egg, or purr, it would be all right.”

“But it is so lovely to swim on the water,” said the Duckling, “so nice to feel the water close over your head when you plunge down to the bottom!”

“A real pleasure that must be!” said the Hen; “you are certainly going mad! Just ask the Cat, who is the wisest person I know, if *he* likes to float on the water or plunge below—I say nothing of my own opinion. Or ask our mistress, if *she* would like to float on the water or feel it closing over her head?”

“You don’t understand me,” said the Duckling.

“Well, if *we* don’t understand you, I should like to know who would. You don’t mean to say that you are wiser than the Cat and the old woman, not to mention myself?”

“I think I will go out into the wide world,” said the Duckling.

“Yes, do!” said the Hen. So the Duckling went. He floated on the water, and dived be-



neath, but he was avoided by all other animals, because of his ugliness.

One evening, as the sun was setting, a whole flight of beautiful great birds rose out of the bushes. The Duckling had never seen anything so pretty as these birds, which were shining white, and had long, slender necks. They were swans, and they uttered a peculiar cry as they spread their broad wings and flew away to warmer climes, across the wide seas. They rose very high in the air, and the ugly Duckling felt quite a strange sensation as he watched them.

He whirled round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched his neck after them high up in the air, and uttered a cry, so loud and strange that he frightened himself.

And the winter grew very cold! The duckling had to swim about in the water so as to keep himself from freezing, and every night the hole in which he was swimming became smaller and smaller. It was freezing so hard that the ice cracked; and the duckling had to move his legs constantly to and fro to prevent the water from freezing up altogether. At last he became exhausted, and lay quite still, and so he froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came along and saw him. He went out to the duckling, knocked a hole in the ice with his wooden shoe, and took him home to his wife.

Here he was brought to life again. The children



wanted to play with him, but the Duckling thought they might hurt him, and in his fright he flew into the milk-basin, and the milk was spilt all over the floor. The woman screamed and threw her hands up in the air; then he flew down into the butter-tub, from there to the meal-barrel, and out again. What a state he was in! The woman screamed and struck him with the fire-irons, the children tumbled over one another in trying to catch the poor Duckling, and they laughed and shouted. Luckily the door was open, and out he flew through the bushes, down on to the newly fallen snow.

One day, as he was lying on the moor among the rushes, the sun again began to shine warmly; the larks were singing; the beautiful spring had come!

All at once he lifted his wings: they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore him easily aloft. Before he knew what had happened, he found himself in a large garden where the apple-trees stood in bloom, and where sweet-scented clusters of lilac hung on the long green boughs, bending down toward the winding river. It was delightful here, on this beautiful spring day; and suddenly through the thicket came three beautiful white swans. They preened their feathers, and floated gently on the water. The Duckling recognized the beautiful creatures, and was overcome by a strange feeling of sadness.

"I will fly over to them, those royal birds, and they will kill me, because I, who am so ugly, dare to approach them. But after all, it is better to be



killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the chickens, kicked by the maid who looks after the poultry-yard, and suffer misery in the winter." So he flew down into the water and swam toward the beautiful swans. They looked at him, and drifted toward him, with outspread wings.

"Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent his head down toward the surface of the water, awaiting death. But what did he see in the clear water? He saw his own image, but he was no longer a clumsy, dark gray bird, ugly and hateful: he was himself a swan! It does not matter if one is brought up among the ducks so long as one is hatched from a swan's egg.

The large swans swam round him and stroked him with their beaks. Into the garden came some little children. They threw bread and corn into the water, and the smallest of them cried: "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously: "Yes, a new one has arrived"; and they clapped their hands, and danced round and round their father and mother, throwing bread-crumbs and biscuits into the river.

"The new one is the prettiest," they said; "he is so young and so lovely." And the old swans bowed to him; and the lilac bowed down its branches to him, and the sun shone warm and bright. Then he rustled his feathers, curved his slender neck, and cried joyfully from the depths of his heart: "I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was only The Ugly Duckling!"



## LITTLE CLAUS AND BIG CLAUS.

THERE lived two men in a village, and they had the same name—both were called Claus; but one had four horses, and the other only one. To distinguish them, they called the one who had four horses, Big Claus, and the one who had only one horse, Little Claus.

The whole week through, Little Claus had to plough for Big Claus, and lend him his one horse; then Big Claus would help him in return, with his four horses, but only once a week, and that was on the Sunday. Hurrah! how Little Claus cracked his whip over all the five horses, for on that one day they were as good as his own! He was so pleased that he cried out: "Gee up, all my horses!"

"Now I must warn you not to say that again," said Big Claus, "for if you do, I shall hit your horse on the head, so that he will fall down dead on the spot, and there will be an end of him."

"No; I will not say it any more," said Little Claus. But when the people passed by, and nodded "good day" to him, he was so pleased, he again called out: "Gee up, all my horses!"

"I'll 'gee up' your horses!" said Big Claus, and



he took a club, and hit Little Claus's only horse on the head so that it fell down dead.

"Alas! now I have no horse at all," said Little Claus, and began to cry. Then he flayed the horse and took the hide, let it dry well in the wind, put it in a bag, which he hung over his shoulder, and went to town to sell the skin.

He had a long way to go, and had to pass through a great wood, and as the weather grew very bad, he lost his way altogether. Before he found it again, night began to fall, and it was too late to go to the town, or return home again.

Close by the road stood a large farmhouse.

Close by stood a large haystack, and between this and the house there was a little shed with a flat thatched roof. Claus crept up to the roof of the shed, where he lay down and made himself comfortable.

The window shutters did not close at the top, so he could see into the room. The farmer's wife and the sexton sat at the table, but nobody else; she was handing the food to him, and he was enjoying the fish, for this was a dish of which he was fond.

All of a sudden he heard somebody riding along the high-road toward the house; it was the farmer coming home.

When they heard the husband coming, they were greatly alarmed, and the wife asked the sexton to hide himself in a big empty chest, which was standing in a corner and quickly put the wine and all the dainty dishes into the oven.



"Oh, dear!" sighed Little Claus on the roof, when he saw all the dishes carried away.

"Is there anybody up there?" asked the farmer.

So little Claus told him how he had lost his way, and asked permission to stay overnight.

"Yes, certainly," said the farmer; "but we must first have something to eat."

The farmer's wife spread the cloth on the table and gave them a large dish of porridge. The farmer was hungry, and ate with good appetite, but Little Claus could not help thinking of the fine roast meat, the fish, and the cake, which he knew were standing in the oven.

He had put his bag, containing the horsehide, under the table at his feet.

He did not like the porridge, so he trod on the bag, and the dry skin inside crackled loudly.

"Be quiet!" said Little Claus to the sack.

"Hullo! what have you in your sack?" asked the farmer.

"Oh! it is a conjurer," said Little Claus. "He says that we oughtn't to eat porridge, for he has conjured the oven full of roast meat.

"What do you mean?" said the farmer, and opened the oven-door in a hurry. There he saw the fine dishes which the wife had hidden away.

The woman dared not say anything, and at once put the dishes on the table; so they made a meal of the fish, the roast meat, and the cake.

Soon afterward, Little Claus trod on the bag again, so that the hide crackled.







"What does he say now?" asked the farmer.

"He says," replied Little Claus, "that he has conjured three bottles of wine for us, and they also are standing in the oven!"

Then the wife had to take out the wine, which she had hidden, and the farmer drank, and grew merry.

"Can he also call up the Evil One himself?" said the farmer. "I should like to see him."

"Oh, yes," said Little Claus; "my conjurer can do anything that I ask. But the Evil One is very ugly to look at, so we had better not see him!"

"Oh! I am not at all afraid," said the farmer.

"Well, he will appear in the shape of a sexton."

"Ugh!" exclaimed the farmer, "that is dreadful, for I cannot bear the sight of a sexton."

"Well, I will now ask my conjurer," said Little Claus, who trod on the sack, bent down, and pretended to listen.

"What does he say?"

"He says that you may go over and open the chest that is standing in the corner; you will then see the Evil One crouching down, but you must hold the lid so that he doesn't slip out."

The farmer opened the lid a little, and peeped into the chest.

"Ugh!" he cried, and sprang backward. "Well, now I have seen him—he was exactly like the sexton at our church."

"You must sell me that conjurer," said the farmer; "I will give you a whole bushel of money."

"No, I cannot take it," said Little Claus.



"But I should so very much like to have him," said the farmer, and he went on begging.

"Well," said Little Claus at last, "you shall have the conjurer for a bushel of money."

"You shall have it," said the farmer; "but as for that chest over there, you must take it away with you—I will not have it in my house."

Little Claus gave the farmer the sack containing the dried hide, and received in return a bushel brimful of money.

On the far side of the forest was a wide and deep river. They had built a fine new bridge over it.

Little Claus stopped at the middle of the bridge, and said quite loudly, so that the sexton in the chest should hear: "Now, what am I to do with this stupid chest? It is as heavy as if there were stones in it, so I'll just throw it into the river."

"No! don't!" cried the sexton inside.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Little Claus, pretending to be frightened. "So he is still inside!"

"Oh! no! no!" cried the sexton; "I will give you a whole bushel of money if you will let me go!"

"Ah! that's a different thing," said Little Claus, and opened the chest. The sexton at once crept out, pushed the empty chest into the river, and went home, where he gave Little Claus a whole bushel of money.

"Well, I am very well paid for that horse," he said to himself, when he came home.

Then he sent a man to Big Claus, to borrow a bushel measure.



"What can he want with it?" thought Big Claus; and he smeared some tar on the bottom of the bushel.

When the bushel came back, there were three new sixpenny-pieces at the bottom of it.

"What is this?" said Big Claus, and ran off at once to Little Claus. "Where did you get all this money from?"

"Oh! I got it for my horse's skin, which I sold last night."

"That is a very good price," said Big Claus. So he ran home, seized an axe, and killed all his four horses, took the skins off them, and drove into the town.

"Hides! hides! Who will buy hides?" he cried through the streets.

All the shoemakers and tanners came running up to him, and asked him his price.

"A bushel of money for each," said Big Claus.

"He wants to make fools of us," they all said, and the shoemakers took their straps, and the tanners their leathern aprons, and they beat Big Claus.

And Big Claus had to run as fast as he could, for he had never had such a thrashing before.

"Well," he said, when he came home, "Little Claus shall pay for this. I will kill him."

Now, Little Claus's old grandmother had just died. She had always been very harsh and unkind to him, but nevertheless, he was very sorry, and he took the dead woman and laid her in his own warm bed, to see if she would not come to life again.

As he was sitting there in the night, the door







opened, and Big Claus came in with his axe. He knew quite well where Little Claus's bed was; so he went straight up to it, and hit the dead grandmother, thinking that she was Little Claus.

"He is a bad, wicked man," said Little Claus.

He then dressed the old grandmother in her Sunday clothes, borrowed a horse from his neighbor, harnessed it to a cart, and propped up the old grandmother, so that she could not fall out.

When the sun rose, they were outside a large inn.

The inn-keeper had a great deal of money; he was also a good-natured fellow, but exceedingly hot-tempered.

"Good morning," he said to Little Claus. "You have your Sunday clothes on early to-day."

"Yes," said Little Claus; "I am going to town with my old grandmother. She is sitting outside in the cart. Take a glass of beer out to her. But you must speak very loudly, because she is a little hard of hearing."

"All right," said the inn-keeper.

"Don't you hear?" cried the inn-keeper, as loudly as he could; "here is a glass of beer from your grandson!" Once more he shouted, and yet again; but as the grandmother did not move, he at last got angry, and threw the glass right in her face, so that she fell back into the cart.

"Hullo!" cried Little Claus, running out at the door; and he seized hold of the inn-keeper. "You have killed my grandmother! See, there is a big wound on her forehead!"



"Oh! this is indeed a misfortune!" cried the host. "Dear Little Claus, I will give you a whole bushel of money, if only you will say nothing about it; or I shall have my head cut off."

When Little Claus came home again with this heap of money, he sent to Big Claus, to ask him if he could lend him a bushel measure.

"What is the meaning of this?" said Big Claus; "I thought I had killed him! I must really see to this myself." So he went over to Little Claus with the bushel. "Where did you get all this money from?" he asked, opening his eyes wide.

"It was my grandmother, and not me, that you killed," said Little Claus; "now I have sold her, and got a bushel of money for her."

"That was a very good price," said Big Claus; and hurried back home, took his axe, and killed his own grandmother, put her in a cart, drove to town, where the druggist lived.

"It is my grandmother," said Big Claus; "I have killed her to get a bushel of money for her."

"Heaven save us!" said the druggist; "you are raving!" and he told him earnestly what a wicked deed he had done.

"I shall pay you for this!" said Big Claus, as he drove along the road; "I shall pay you for this, Little Claus!" As soon as he came home, he took the biggest sack he could find, went over to Little Claus, and put him in the sack, and said: "Now I am going to drown you!"

It was a good long way before they came to the



river, and Little Claus was not very light to carry. The road led past the church; the organ was playing, and the people were singing beautifully; so Big Claus put down the sack, with Little Claus in it, by the church door, and in he went.

Just then there came along an old drover with snow-white hair, carrying a big stick in his hand. He was driving a whole herd of oxen.

"Oh, dear," sighed Little Claus; "I am so very young, to be going to Heaven."

"And I, poor thing," said the ox-driver, "I am so old, and have not got there yet."

"Open the sack," cried Little Claus, "and creep into it in my place; go to Heaven at once."

"Well, I should very much like to, indeed," said the drover, and opened the sack for Little Claus.

"Please to take care of the cattle," said the old man, and crept into the sack.

A little while afterward, Big Claus came out of the church, and threw the sack again over his shoulder.

"How light he seems now: that must be because I have heard a psalm." So he went to the river, which was deep and wide, and threw the sack with the old drover into the water.

Then he went toward home, but when he came to the crossing of the roads, he met Little Claus.

"What is this?" cried Big Claus; "have I not drowned you?"

"Yes," said Little Claus; "you threw me into the river half an hour ago."



"But where did you get all these fine cattle from?" asked Big Claus.

"They are sea-cattle; but first I thank you very much for having drowned me, for now that I have come up again, I am quite rich. It is very pretty down there, with flowers and the freshest grass."

"But why did you come back here so soon?" asked Big Claus.

"Oh!" said Little Claus; "I was very artful about that. You remember, a mermaid told me that a mile up the river there was a herd of cattle for me. But the river makes several bends, and that is why I've come up on land, for by crossing over from one bend of the river to the other, I save nearly half a mile."

"Oh, you are a lucky fellow," said Big Claus. "Do you think that I could get sea-cattle, too, if I went down to the bottom of the river?"

"Well, I should think so," said Little Claus; "but I cannot carry you in the sack, for you are too heavy. You must go down there yourself."

"Thank you very much," said Big Claus; "but if I do not get any sea-cattle when I get down there, I shall give you a thrashing."

When the cattle, which were thirsty, saw the river, they ran as fast as they could to the water.

"See how they hurry!" said Little Claus; "they long to get down to the bottom of the river."

"Yes, but help me first," said Big Claus, "or I will thrash you;" and he crept into a big sack.



"All right," said Little Claus, and he put a big stone in the sack, and pushed him over.

Splash! went Big Claus into the river, and sank.

"I am afraid he will never find the cattle," said Little Claus; and then he drove home with his own herd.



THE FARMER THINKS HE SEES THE DEVIL  
IN THE CHEST



## THE LITTLE MERMAID.

FAR out in the ocean the water is as blue as the loveliest corn-flower, and as clear as the purest crystal; but it is very deep—and down there live the sea-folk.

The Sea-King down there had for many years been a widower, and his old mother kept house for him. She was a sensible old lady, but very proud of her noble birth, on account of which she always wore twelve oysters on her tail, whereas others of high rank were allowed to wear only six. Otherwise, she deserved great praise, especially for the love she bore toward the little sea-princesses, her grand-daughters.

There were six of them—beautiful children, but the youngest was the prettiest of them all.

Nothing pleased her more than to hear about the world above the sea. She made the old grandmother tell her everything she knew about the ships, and the towns, the people, and the animals.

“When you are fifteen years old,” said the grandmother, “I will let you go up to the surface, and sit on the rocks in the moonlight, and see the great ships that go sailing by. Then you will see forests and towns.”



Now, the eldest princess had just reached her fifteenth year, and had been up to the surface. When she came back, she had hundreds of things to tell; but the most delightful thing, she said, was to lie on the sand-bank in the moonlight, by the calm sea, and look at the great town on the shore, the many church towers and spires, and hear the ringing of the bells.

The next year the second sister received permission to visit the surface of the water and swim wherever she pleased. She rose up just as the sun was setting, and this, she thought, was the most beautiful sight of all.

The next year the third sister came up; she was the boldest of them all, for she swam all the way up a broad river that was flowing into the sea.

In a little bay she found a number of children, who, quite naked, were running about and splashing in the water; she wanted to play with them, but they ran away quite frightened. Then there came a little black animal: it was a dog, but she had never seen a dog before, and it barked so furiously at her that she became frightened, and swam back again to the open sea. But never could she forget the beautiful forests, the green hills, and the pretty children who could swim in the water, although they had no fish-tails.

The fourth sister was not so bold; she stayed out in the open sea, and declared that that was the most beautiful place of all. Now came the turn of the fifth sister. Her birthday fell in the winter, and







she saw what the others had not seen on their first visit. The sea seemed quite green, and in all directions large icebergs were floating about. She seated herself on one of the largest, but all the ships steered away in terror from the iceberg where she sat, her long hair floating in the wind.

When the sisters in the evening floated up arm-in-arm through the sea, their little sister used to stand quite alone, looking after them.

"Oh! were I but fifteen years old!" she cried; "I know that I should love the world above, and the people who live there."

At last she reached her fifteenth year. "Well, now, you are of age," said her grandmother, "come, let me dress you prettily like your other sisters," and so she put a wreath of white lilies in her hair, but each petal in the flower was a half-pearl, and the old lady caused eight large oysters to cling to the princess's tail, as a sign of high rank.

"They hurt me!" cried the little mermaid.

"One must suffer for one's pride," said the old lady.

"Good-by," she said, and as light and as clear as a bubble she rose up through the sea.

The sun had just set as she raised her head above the surface. There lay a great ship. There was music and singing, and as the evening grew darker, hundreds of bright-colored lanterns were lit; it seemed as if the flags of all nations were fluttering in the air. The little mermaid swam close up to



the cabin window, and now and then, as the waves lifted her up, she looked in through the clear glass panes, and saw a great many well-dressed people. But the handsomest amongst them was the young Prince with the large black eyes. It was his birthday, and that was the reason of all this festivity.

It was getting late, but the little mermaid could not take her eyes away from the ship and the beautiful Prince. The brightly colored lanterns were put out, and the ship began to move faster, and one sail after the other was unfurled. Then the waves rose high, heavy clouds came up, and lightning flashed in the far distance. The huge ship creaked, the thick planks gave way under the thud of the waves, while the water rushed in.

Now the little mermaid saw that the ship was in danger, and she herself had carefully to avoid the wreckage. Each was struggling as best he could, but she was searching for the young Prince, and as the ship broke up, she saw him sinking into the depths of the sea.

At first she was delighted, but then she remembered that human beings cannot survive in the water. No! no! he must not die!—so she swam among the wreckage that was drifting about, till at last she came to the young Prince, who was swimming in the raging sea. His limbs began to fail him, his eyes were closing; and he would surely have died had not the little mermaid come to his aid. She held his head above the water, and let the waves carry her and him.



In the morning the storm was over, but of the ship not a trace could be seen. The sun rose red and glowing from the sea, and its rays seemed to bring back the hue of life to the Prince's cheeks, but still his eyes remained closed. The mermaid kissed his fair high forehead, and stroked back the wet hair.

In the distance she could see the shore. Along the coast were beautiful green forests, and nestling among them lay a church or a convent. She swam thither with the Prince, and laid him on the sand.

The bells began ringing in the great white building, and a number of young girls came out to walk in the garden. So the little mermaid swam farther out, and hid herself; then she watched to see who would come to find the poor Prince.

Before long a young girl approached. She seemed frightened at first, but only for a moment, for she ran to fetch some one else, and the mermaid saw how the Prince was brought to life, and how he smiled on all around. She felt very sorrowful, and when he was carried into the great house, she dived beneath the waves, back to her father's palace. Her sisters asked her what she had seen, but she told them nothing. At last she could keep her secret no longer; she told it to one of her sisters, who told it to the rest; but no one else knew of it, save one or two other mermaids, who told it only to their dearest friends. One of these knew who the Prince was, and whence he came, and where his kingdom lay.



The little mermaid now knew where he lived, and thither she rose, many an evening and many a night, from the depths of the sea.

Day by day human beings became more dear to her—more and more she wished that she could go up and live among them—their world seemed to her so much larger than her own. “If human beings are not drowned,” asked the little mermaid, “do they never die, as we die down here in the sea?”

“Yes,” replied the old lady, “they die, and their lifetime is shorter than ours. We mer-people live three hundred years, but when we cease to exist, we become merely foam on the sea. We have not an immortal soul: for us there is no life hereafter.”

“Why did we not receive immortal souls?” asked the little mermaid. “Can I do nothing to win an immortal soul?”

“No,” said the old lady, “not unless a human being were to love you—love you so dearly that you should be more to him even than father or mother.”

“While my sisters are dancing in my father’s palace, I will go to the sea-witch whom I have always feared so much. She may be able to help me.”

The little mermaid went out of her garden toward the foaming whirlpools behind which the sea-witch had her home. “I know exactly what you want,” said the sea-witch; “it is very stupid of you, for it will bring you misfortune. You would like to get rid of your fish-tail, and have two stumps to walk on, like the human beings, so that



the young Prince may fall in love with you, and you may win him and an immortal soul;" and the witch laughed loudly and horribly. "You have come just at the right time, for after sunrise to-morrow I should have been unable to help you for another year. I will make you a potion, and before the sun rises you must swim with it to the shore, sit down on the beach, and drink it. Your fish-tail will then shrink and become what the people of earth call legs; but the change will be very painful, and you will feel as if you were being stabbed with a sharp sword.

"But remember," said the witch, "when once you have received a human form, you can never become a mermaid again; you can never dive down through the water to your sisters, and if you do not succeed in winning the love of the Prince, you can never receive an immortal soul. The day after he is married to another, your heart will break, and you will become nothing but foam on the sea."

"I am willing!" said the little mermaid.

"But I must be paid," said the witch. "You have the most beautiful voice of all down here in the depths of the sea, and with this you think to charm the Prince; but this voice you must give to me; the best thing you possess I must have for my costly draught."

"But when you take my voice," said the little mermaid, "what is left to me?"

"Your beautiful figure," said the witch, "your graceful carriage, and your eloquent eyes, and with



these you can surely bewitch a man's heart. Well, have you lost your courage? Put out your little tongue so that I can cut it off in payment, and then I will give you the magic draught."

"Be it so," said the little mermaid, and the witch put her cauldron on the fire to make the magic potion. When the draught was ready, it looked like pure water. "Here it is," said the witch, and cut off the tongue of the little mermaid.

The sun had not yet risen when she came in sight of the Prince's palace, and mounted the splendid marble steps; and the moon was shining brightly when the little maid drank the sharp burning draught. It was just as if a two-edged sword had been driven through her body, and she fainted and lay as if dead. When she awoke the sun was shining over the water and she felt a sharp pain, but just before her stood the handsome young Prince. She looked at him sweetly with her deep blue eyes, for alas! she could not speak. He took her by the hand and led her to the palace, and at every step she felt as if she were walking on pointed needles or sharp knives, just as the witch had told her; but this she willingly suffered. By the Prince's side she tripped along light as a bubble, and every one wondered at her graceful movements. They dressed her in costly silk, and in the palace she was the most beautiful of them all; but she was dumb, and neither spoke nor sang. Beautiful slaves dressed in silver and gold stepped forward and sang to the Prince and his royal parents; one sang sweeter than



all the others, and the Prince clapped his hands and smiled at her. This made the little mermaid quite sad, for she knew she could once have sung far more sweetly, and thought, "If only he could know that I have given away my voice forever so that I might be with him!"

The slaves now performed pretty fairy-like dances to the sweetest music, and the little mermaid lifted up her lovely white arms, and on the tips of her toes glided over the floor, dancing as no one had ever danced before. With every movement her beauty became more striking, and her eyes spoke more eloquently to the heart than the songs of the slaves. The Prince was charmed and called her his little foundling, and she danced again and again, though whenever her foot touched the floor it seemed as if she were treading on sharp knives.

In the Prince's palace, when all were asleep at night, she went out on to the broad marble steps, and cooled her burning feet in the cold sea-water, thinking the while of those in the depths below. One night her sisters came up arm-in-arm. Mournfully they sang as they floated upon the water; she waved her hand to them, and they recognized her, and told her how unhappy she had made them all.

The Prince loved her as one loves a dear little child, but he never thought of making her his queen, and did not dream that if she were not, she could not win an immortal soul, but would become as foam on the sea on the day of his wedding.

"Do you not love me best of all!" the little mer-







maid's eyes seemed to say, when he took her in his arms and kissed her beautiful forehead.

"Yes, I love you most dearly," said the Prince, "for you have the best heart of them all; you are the most devoted to me, and are like a little maid whom I once met, but whom I shall never see again. I was on a ship that was wrecked; the waves drove me to land near a holy temple, where young girls were performing the sacred rites. The youngest of them found me on the shore and saved my life; I saw her only twice, but she is the only one in the world I could love, and you are like her, and have almost driven her image from my mind."

Now, it was rumored that the Prince was about to marry the daughter of a neighboring king. "I must see this beautiful princess," he said; "my parents desire it, but they do not oblige me to bring her back home as my bride, and I cannot love her; she is not like the pretty maiden in the temple whom you resemble, and if ever I should choose a bride, I would sooner it were you, my dear dumb foundling, with your speaking eyes"; and he kissed her rosy lips, and played with her long hair, while she dreamed of human happiness and an immortal soul.

The next morning the ship sailed into the harbor of the neighboring king's beautiful city. All the church bells were ringing, bugles sounded from the top of the high towers, while the soldiers down below stood in their ranks with glittering bayonets and flying colors. Every day was a festival, balls and entertainments followed one upon the other,



but the princess had not yet appeared. At last she came; the little mermaid was there, anxious to see whether she really was as beautiful as rumor said; and she could not but acknowledge that she had never seen a more lovely being. Her skin was so white and clear, and behind her long black eye-lashes smiled two faithful deep-blue eyes.

"It was you," said the Prince, "you, who saved me when I lay dying by the sea-shore," and he folded his blushing bride in his arms.

"Oh, I am too happy," he said to the little mermaid; "that which I wished for most, but never dared to hope for, has come to pass. You will rejoice at my happiness, for you love me best of all," and the little mermaid kissed his hand, but she felt as if her heart were breaking.

All was quiet and silent on the ship, the steersman stood at the helm, and the little mermaid laid her white arms on the railings and looked toward the east watching for the rosy dawn, the first beams of which she knew would kill her. Then she saw her sisters raise themselves up above the sea. They were as pale as she, but their long beautiful hair floated no more in the wind: it had been cut off. "We have given it to the witch," they said, "that we might help you, so that you need not die to-night. She has given us a knife: here it is—look how sharp it is. Before the sun has risen you must thrust it in the Prince's heart, and when his warm blood drops on your feet they will grow together to a fish-tail, and you will become a mer-



maid again, and can dive down into the water with us and live your three hundred years, before you become as the salt sea foam. Hasten, then; he or you must die before sunrise."

The little mermaid drew the curtain from the tent, and saw the bride sleeping with her head on the Prince's breast: she bowed down, kissed his noble forehead, and looked at the sky, where the dawn grew more and more bright; looked at the sharp knife, and then looked again at the Prince, who in his dream called his bride by name. She only was in his thoughts, and the knife trembled in the mermaid's hand; but she threw it far away out into the waves, which shone quite red where it fell, and the drops that spurted from the water looked like blood. Once more she cast a dying glance at the Prince; then she threw herself from the ship into the waves, where she felt that her body was dissolving into foam.

The sun rose from the waters; its warm rays fell on the cold sea-foam, and the little mermaid felt nothing of death. She saw the shining sun, and up above her were floating hundreds of beautiful beings. The little mermaid felt that she had a form like theirs, that she rose higher and higher above the foam.

"Where am I going?" she asked, and her voice sounded so ethereal that no earthly music could compare with it.

"To the daughters of the air," they answered.  
"A mermaid has no immortal soul, and can never



obtain one unless she win a human being's love; her eternal existence is in the hands of another. The daughters of the air likewise have no immortal soul, but by good actions they may create one. You have striven with all your heart to do the same as we. By your sufferings and endurance, you have raised yourself to the aerial world; by good actions you can in the space of three hundred years create an immortal soul."

The little mermaid raised her transparent eyes toward God's sun, and, for the first time, shed tears.

On the ship all was life and noise. She saw the Prince and his beautiful bride, who were sadly looking for her in the bubbling foam, as if they knew she had thrown herself into the waves. Unseen, she kissed the bridegroom's forehead, smiled upon him, and rose with the other children of the air to the rosy clouds that were floating in the wind. "In three hundred years we may float like this into the Kingdom of God."

"And maybe even sooner," whispered one. "Unseen, we float into the houses of men, where children are, and for every day that we find a good child who is the joy of his parents and deserves their love, God makes our time of probation shorter. The child does not know that we fly through the room, and that when we smile with joy at his goodness, a year is taken from the three hundred; but if we see a naughty or a wicked child, we shed tears of sorrow, and every tear adds a day to our time of trial."



## THE WILD SWANS.

FAR away, in the land to which the swallows fly in the winter, there lived a King, who had eleven sons, and one daughter, Elsa. Their father, who was King over the whole of the country, married a wicked Queen, who did not love the children. This they discovered on the very first day. There was a festival at the palace, and the children were playing at receiving company; but although they usually had all kinds of pastry and roasted apples, the Queen gave them only sand in a tea-cup, and told them to suppose that it was something nice.

The next week she sent little Elsa away to live with a peasant and his wife; then she told the King so many untrue things about the princes that he no longer cared anything about them.

"Go out into the world and look after yourselves," said the wicked Queen. "Fly away like great birds that have no voice."

But she could not make them as ugly as she would have liked; so they were transformed into eleven beautiful white swans. With a strange cry, they flew out of the window of the palace, far away over the park and the forest.

When she was fifteen years old, Elsa returned



home. The Queen saw how beautiful her little step-daughter had become, and her heart was filled with envy and hatred. She would have liked to turn her into a wild swan, like her brothers; but she did not dare to do that, just then, because the King wished to see his daughter.

Early in the morning the Queen went into her bath-room, which was built of marble, and prettily furnished with soft cushions and the most beautiful carpets. Then she took three toads, kissed them, and said to one of them—

“When Elsa comes to the bath, seat yourself upon her head that she may become as stupid as you.”

And to the second she said: “Seat yourself on her forehead, so that she may be as ugly as you, and her father may not know her.”

To the third she whispered: “Lie on her heart, and give her an evil temper, that may bring misfortune upon her.”

So she placed the toads in the clear water, which at once turned green, summoned Elsa, undressed her, and bade her enter the bath. As she dipped her head under the water, one of the toads seated itself on her head, another on her forehead, and the third on her bosom; but Elsa did not seem to notice them; and as soon as she rose out of the water, three red poppies were floating on the surface. If the toads had not been venomous, and kissed by the witch Queen, they would have been changed into red roses; but they became flowers all the same,



for they had rested on her head and on her heart, and she was too pious and innocent to be hurt by the power of witchcraft.

The wicked Queen, seeing this, washed the poor girl with walnut-juice, until she was quite brown, and tangled her beautiful hair until it was impossible to recognize the pretty Elsa. When her father saw her he was quite shocked, and declared she could not be his daughter. None but the watchdogs knew her, and they could say nothing.

Poor little Elsa wept and thought of her eleven brothers who were all far away. Full of sorrow, she stole away from the palace, and wandered the whole day long over the fields till she came to the great forest. She had not been here long when the night fell, and she lost the path. So she lay down on the soft moss, said her evening prayer, and leaned her head against the stump of a tree.

When she awoke, the sun was high in the heavens, although she could not see it, owing to the dense foliage of the lofty trees; but the sunbeams played through the leaves like a glittering golden veil. The air was sweetly scented, and the birds almost perched themselves on Elsa's shoulders.

When she had dressed herself and plaited her long hair, she went to the rippling spring, drank out of the hollow of her hand, and went deeper into the wood, without knowing whither she was going. She thought of her brothers, and of the good God, who surely would not abandon her. He it was who







made the wild apple-tree, to give food to the hungry; He who led her to such a tree, its branches hanging heavy with fruit.

Here she had her midday meal; she put props under the branches, and then continued her journey, right into the darkest part of the wood.

The night grew very dark; not a single little glow-worm sparkled from the moss. Sadly she laid herself down to sleep, and it seemed to her that the branches above were parted, and that the Christ Jesus with His mild eyes was looking down upon her, while little angels peeped through over His head and under His arms.

When she awoke in the morning she did not know whether she had dreamed this, or whether it had really happened. She had only walked a few steps on her way, when she met an old woman with a basket full of berries, and she gave Elsa a few of these to eat. Elsa asked her whether she had seen eleven princes riding through the forest.

"No," replied the old woman, "but yesterday I saw eleven swans, with golden crowns on their heads, swimming down the stream close by," and she led Elsa a little farther away to a slope at the bottom of which a rivulet was flowing.

Elsa bade the old woman farewell, and followed the banks until she came to the place where the stream flowed out into the open sea.

On the seaweed that was thrown up by the waves lay eleven white swans' feathers; these she gathered into a bunch. Drops of water were sprinkled



over them, but whether they were dew-drops or tears, no one could tell.

Elsa did not feel so lonely by the shore, for there were constant changes in the sea. At sunset Elsa saw eleven white swans, with golden crowns on their heads, flying toward the land. They flew one behind the other, looking like a long white ribbon in the sky. Elsa crept up to the slope and hid behind a bush; and the swans alighted close to her, flapping their great white wings. Then the sun sank into the water, and in a moment the plumage of the swans had fallen off and eleven handsome princes—Elsa's brothers—stood before her!

She uttered a loud cry, for, although they were much changed, she knew them—she felt that it must be they. So she ran into their arms, calling them by name; and they were all very happy when they saw and recognized their little sister, who was now a tall, beautiful girl. They laughed and cried; and soon they understood how wicked their step-mother had been to them all.

“We fly about,” said the eldest of the brothers, “in the shape of wild swans as long as the sun is in the sky; but as soon as it sets we recover our human form. We are bound, however, to find a resting-place before sunset, for at that moment if we were flying high up in the sky, we should fall as human beings down into the depths of the sea.

“How shall I be able to save you?” asked their sister; they slept very little, but talked together nearly the whole of the night.



"To-morrow we must fly away, and may not return for a whole year, but we cannot leave you here alone. Have you courage to come with us? My arm is strong enough to carry you through the forest; why should not all our wings be strong enough to fly with you over the sea?"

"Yes; take me with you!" said Elsa.

They spent the night in making a couch with the bark of the pliant willow and with tough reeds. It was large and strong; Elsa lay down upon it, and when the sun rose, and the brothers were transformed into wild swans, they took hold of the couch with their beaks, and flew high up into the sky with their dear little sister, who was still asleep. As the sunbeams shone on her face, one of the swans flew over her head to shade her with his broad wings.

They were so high up that the first ship they saw beneath them looked like a white gull floating on the water. A great cloud rising behind them appeared like a lofty mountain, and upon it Elsa saw her own shadow and those of the eleven swans, looking gigantic in size as they flew past. Onward they flew, the whole day long, like an arrow whizzing through the air, but slower perhaps than usual, for now they had their sister to carry.

The black clouds came nearer, and the freshening breeze announced a storm. The clouds shot forward in a leaden, threatening mass, and the lightning burst forth, flash after flash. Now the sun was nearly on the horizon, and Elsa's heart was trembling. Suddenly the swans darted for-



ward so swiftly that she thought she would fall, but still they sailed onward. The sun was half way down in the water when at last she saw the little rock beneath her, but it seemed no larger than a seal with its head above the surface.

So swiftly did the sun sink that before her feet touched the ground it seemed scarcely larger than a star, and then it was suddenly extinguished, like the last spark on a piece of burnt paper, but at dawn the air was pure and calm, and as soon as the sun rose the swans flew away with Elsa from the rock.

It was an ever-changing scene that was spread before her eyes; until at last she saw the country to which they were bound—beautiful blue mountains covered with cedar forests, villages, and palaces. Long before the sun went down she was sitting on a cliff before a huge cavern overgrown with trailing green creepers, like embroidered tapestry.

“Now we shall see what you will dream of to-night,” said the youngest of the brothers, as he showed her the beautiful apartment in which she was to sleep.

“If I could dream how to save you!” she said, and this thought was so constantly in her mind, and so fervent was her prayer to God for help, that even in her slumber she continued to pray.

It seemed to her that she flew high up in the air, and that a fairy came to meet her, beautiful and radiant, but very much like the old woman who



had given her the berries in the forest, and told her about the swans with the golden crowns.

“Your brothers can be saved,” she said; “Do you see this stinging-nettle that I hold in my hand? Many nettles of this kind may be found around the cave in which you sleep; these only, and the kind that grow upon church-yard graves, are of any use—remember that! These you must gather, although they will burn your hands with blisters. Crush them with your feet: they will become a kind of flax, and from this you must spin and knit eleven shirts with long sleeves; throw these over the eleven wild swans, and the spell will be broken. But remember that from the moment you undertake this task, until it is finished, you must not speak. The first word that you utter will go like a deadly dagger through your brothers’ hearts: upon your tongue hang their lives. Remember all this!”

When the sun set, the brothers arrived, and were sorely frightened to find her quite dumb. They thought it was a new spell cast upon her by the step-mother, but when they saw her hands, they understood what she was doing for their sake. The youngest brother wept, and where his tears fell she felt no pain, and the burning blisters vanished.

The whole night through she worked, for she could not rest until she had saved her dear brothers. During the whole of the following day, while the swans were away, she sat in solitude, but never had the hours gone so quickly. One shirt was already finished; now she began the next.



Then she heard the sound of huntsmen's horns among the mountains. She trembled with fear; the sound came nearer, and she heard the barking of the hounds. Then she fled in terror into the cave, gathered together the nettles which she had plucked, and sat down upon the bundle.

Suddenly a great hound came bounding from a thicket, and soon afterward another, and yet another. They barked loudly, ran back, and came again. Before many minutes all the huntsmen stood outside the cave; the handsomest among them was the King of the country. He advanced toward Elsa; never before had he seen a more beautiful maiden.

"Come with me," said he: "you must not stay here. If you are as good as you are beautiful, I will clothe you in silk and velvet, place a gold crown on your head, and you shall live in my most magnificent palace!" and he lifted her upon his horse.

She wept and wrung her hands, but the King said: "My only wish is to make you happy; one day you will thank me for this." And he rode away among the mountains, holding her in front of him on his horse, while the huntsmen followed.

At sunset, they saw a magnificent city with churches and cupolas, and the King led Elsa into his palace, where great fountains were playing in the lofty marble halls, and where the walls and ceilings were covered with rich paintings. But she had eyes for none of this grandeur; she could only weep and mourn. Passively she allowed the women



to array her in costly robes, plait her hair with precious pearls, and cover her blistered fingers with dainty gloves.

As she stood there in all her splendor, she was so dazzlingly beautiful that the whole Court bowed before her, and the King declared that he would make her his bride. But the Archbishop shook his head, and whispered that the beautiful maiden from the wood was surely a witch, who had blinded their eyes and ensnared the King's heart.

The King now opened a little chamber close by, where she was to sleep. It was hung with costly green tapestry and closely resembled the cave in which she had lived. On the floor lay the bundle of fibre which she had prepared from the nettles, and on the wall hung the shirt which was already finished. One of the huntsmen had thought these things very curious and brought them with him. "Here you may dream that you are back in your former home," said the King. "Here is the work with which you occupied yourself; now in the midst of all your splendor, it may please you to think of that time."

When Elsa saw these things that lay so near her heart, a smile played upon her lips, and the blood rushed to her cheeks; she thought of her brothers' deliverance, and kissed the King's hand. He pressed her to his heart, and commanded that all the church bells should announce the wedding festival. The beautiful dumb maiden of the wood was to be the Queen of the land!







Day by day she grew to love him more: oh! how she longed to confide in him and tell him her grief; but no: she must remain dumb—in silence she must fulfil her task.

At night, therefore, she crept away from him and went into the little chamber that had been arranged like the cave, and here she wove one shirt after another. But when she began on the seventh, she had no more flax left. She knew that the nettles which she could use were growing in the church-yard, but she had to gather them herself, and how was she to get there? "Alas, what is the pain in my fingers compared with the anguish of my heart?" she thought. "I must make the attempt; surely Heaven will not deny me help."

With a trembling heart, as if she were about to commit an evil act, she stole down, one moonlight night, into the garden, and passed through the long avenues and lonely streets to the church-yard.

One person only had seen her, the Archbishop, for he watched while others slept. Now he felt sure that he was right in his distrust of the Queen: she was a witch, and had enchanted the King, together with the whole of the people.

He told the King what he had seen and what he feared, and as the words fell from his lips, the carven images of the Saints shook their heads as if they wished to say, "It is not so: Elsa is innocent."

Two great tears rolled down the King's cheeks, and he went home with doubt in his heart. At night he pretended to sleep, but sleep was far from



his eyes, and he noticed how Elsa rose from her bed. Every night this was repeated, and on each occasion he followed her softly, and saw her disappear into the little room.

Once more, for the last time, she had to go down to the church-yard, but the King and the Archbishop followed her. They saw her disappear through the wicket-gate of the church-yard, and when they came nearer they caught sight of the hideous creatures sitting on the tombstones, just as Elsa had seen them; and the King turned away, for he thought that she, too, was one of them—she whose head had that very evening rested on his breast. “Let the people judge her!” he said; and the people condemned her to be burnt at the stake.

The people were streaming out through the gates of the town to see the witch burned. A wretched horse drew the cart on which she sat: they had dressed her in a garment of coarse sackcloth, and her lovely, long hair hung loose around her pretty head. Her cheeks were deadly pale, and her lips moved silently, while her fingers were weaving the green fibres, for even on her way to death she would not give up her work.

Ten shirts lay at her feet, the eleventh she was still knitting. The mob jeered at her. “Look at the witch, how she mutters! She has no hymn-book in her hands; no—there she sits with her hateful witchery. Tear it from her! tear it into a thousand pieces!”

And they surged around her; and tried to tear



the shirts into fragments; but eleven white swans came flying into their midst, settled upon the cart, and flapped with their great wings, so that the mob gave way in terror.

"That is a sign from Heaven—she is surely innocent," whispered many.

Then the executioner seized her by the hand—instantly she threw the eleven shirts over the swans, and there stood eleven handsome princes: but the youngest had a swan's wing instead of an arm, for she had not quite finished his shirt.

"Now I may speak," she said; "I am innocent!"

And the people, who saw what had happened, bowed before her as before a saint; but she sank lifeless into her brothers' arms, for the suspense, anguish, and grief had overcome her. "Yes, innocent she is," said the eldest brother, and then he told the whole story.

While he spoke, the air was filled with fragrance as from a million roses, for every piece of wood in the pile had taken root and sent forth branches. There stood a fragrant hedge, tall and dense, covered with red roses: and at the top was a single rose, dazzlingly white, and shining like a star: this the King plucked and placed on Elsa's bosom, and she awoke, with happiness in her heart.

And all the church bells began to ring of their own accord, and the birds came in great flocks, and a wedding procession returned to the palace such as no King had ever seen before.



# THE SNOW QUEEN.

## A FAIRY TALE IN SEVEN STORIES.

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### FIRST STORY.

#### TREATS OF THE MIRROR AND ITS FRAGMENTS.

Now let us begin. When we have got to the end of our story, we shall know more than we know now, for it was a wicked Goblin, it was one of the very worst—in fact, it was the Evil One himself!

One day he was in a really good humor, for he made a mirror, which had the quality of causing everything good and beautiful that was reflected in it to shrink almost to nothing, whereas anything that was worthless and ugly became magnified and looked worse than ever. The loveliest landscapes appeared in this mirror like boiled spinach, and the handsomest people looked hideous, stood on their heads, and had no bodies. Their faces became distorted, so that it was impossible to recognize them, and if they had a freckle, it would be sure to spread out over their nose and mouth.

Now, when a good and pious thought passed through the mind of any one, it was shown in the



mirror as a grin, and the Goblin would laugh at his clever invention. All those who attended his school—for he kept a goblin school—talked about it, and declared that a miracle had happened.

For the first time, they said, one could see what the world and mankind really looked like. They carried the mirror far and wide, until at last there was not a country nor a person that had not been distorted in it. Then they wished to fly up to Heaven also, so as to make fun of the angels.

The higher they flew with the mirror, the more it grinned, so that they could hardly keep hold of it. Higher and higher they flew, nearer and nearer to Heaven; but suddenly the mirror trembled so violently with grinning that it flew out of their hands and dropped down to the earth, where it broke into a hundred million billion pieces and many more. Then it caused much more mischief than before, for some of the pieces were hardly as large as a grain of sand, and these flew around in the wide world, and when they got into the eyes of the people, there they remained. These people then saw everything reversed, or had only eyes for the wrong side of things, for every particle retained the same qualities as had previously been possessed by the entire mirror.

Some people got a little fragment of the mirror into their hearts. This was very terrible indeed, for their hearts then became like a lump of ice.

The Goblin laughed until his sides ached, so greatly was he tickled with all this mischief.



But in the air some small fragments of glass were floating about. Now we shall hear about them.

## SECOND STORY.

### A LITTLE BOY AND A LITTLE GIRL.

In a large town, where there are so many houses and people that there is not room enough for everybody to have a little garden, and where for this reason most people must be satisfied with plants in flower-pots, lived two poor children who had a garden just a little larger than a flower-pot. They were not brother and sister, but they loved one another as much as if they had been. Their parents lived opposite each other, high up in two garrets. Where the roof of one house joined the roof of the other, a little gable projected from each of the houses. You only had to step over the gutter to get from one window to the other.

His name was Kay, and her name was Gerda. In the summer-time they could get out to each other in one jump; but in the winter they had to run downstairs, and then up quite a number of steps. Outside, the snow was whirling about.

"It is the white bees that are swarming," said the old Grandmother.

"Can the Snow Queen come in here?" asked the little girl.

"Well, let her come," said the little boy; "I will



put her on the warm stove, and then she will melt." But the Grandmother stroked his hair, and told them other stories.

In the evening, when little Kay was at home and half undressed, he crept up on to one of the chairs by the window, and looked out through the little hole. A couple of snow-flakes were falling outside, and one of them remained lying on the edge of one of the flower-boxes. The snow-flake grew larger and larger, until at last it became a little lady dressed in the finest white gauze, that seemed to consist of millions of star-like crystals. She was very beautiful and delicate, but of ice—of dazzling, glittering ice. And yet she was alive. Her eyes twinkled like two shining stars, but there was no peace or rest in them. She nodded toward the window and beckoned with her hand. The little boy grew frightened, and jumped down from the chair; and then it seemed that a great bird flew past outside the window. The next day there was a clear frost, and then it thawed.

The spring came, the sun shone, the green buds peeped forth, the swallows built their nests, the windows were opened, and the little children again sat in their own little garden in the gutter, on the roof, high up above all the other stories.

What beautiful summer days they were! How delightful it was to be out there by the fresh rose-trees, which seemed as if they would bloom forever! Kay and Gerda sat and looked in the picture-book of animals and birds. Then it was—the







clock in the big church tower was just striking five—that little Kay said—

“Oh! something struck me in my heart, and now I have something in my eye.” The little girl flung her arms round his neck; he blinked his eyes; but no, there was nothing to be seen. “I think it has gone,” he said, but it was not gone: it was just one of those little glass particles that sprang from the mirror, the magic mirror.

“What are you crying for?” he asked; “it makes you look ugly. Oh, fie!” he exclaimed all at once, “this rose is worm-eaten, and look, that one is crooked! They are really very ugly roses, just like the box they grow in.” So he gave the box a hard kick with his foot, and tore the two roses off.

“Kay, what are you doing?” cried the little girl.

But when he saw how frightened she was he tore off yet another rose, and ran in through his window away from pretty little Gerda.

One winter's day, Kay came in wearing thick gloves, and with his sleigh on his back. He called out to Gerda: “I have permission to go sleighing in the big square where the other boys play,” and off he went.

Just as they were playing, a large sleigh came by. It was painted white, and inside sat somebody wrapped in white fur, and wearing a rough white hood. The sleigh drove twice round the square; Kay quickly tied to it his own little sleigh, and was carried away behind it.

They drove out of the town, and then the snow



began to fall, so thickly that the little boy could hardly see a yard before him as they swept along.

The snow-flakes became larger; until at last they looked like great white fowls. All at once they flew aside, the big sleigh stopped, and the person who was driving it rose up; fur and cap were of pure snow. It was a lady, tall, and slender, and dazzling white—it was the Snow Queen!

“We have driven well,” she said, “but why do you shiver like that? Creep into my bear-skin fur.” She seated him in the sleigh beside her, wrapped the fur around him; and it seemed as if he had sunk down into a snow-drift. “Are you still shivering?” she asked, and kissed him on the brow.

“Now you must have no more kisses,” said the Snow Queen, “or I might kiss you to death.” They flew over forests and lakes, over land and sea. Beneath them the cold wind was whistling, the wolves were howling, and over the glistening snow flew black, screaming crows. But beyond, the moon shone large and bright in the sky, and Kay gazed at it through the long, long winter night. In the daytime he slept at the feet of the Snow Queen.

### THIRD STORY.

#### THE FLOWER-GARDEN OF THE WITCH WOMAN.

But how did little Gerda get on when Kay did not return? What had become of him? Nobody



knew where he was; many tears were shed, and little Gerda wept long and bitterly.

Then came the spring, with warmer sunshine.

"Kay is dead and gone!" said little Gerda.

"I do not believe that!" said the sunshine.

"He is dead and gone!" she said to the swallows. "We do not believe it!" they replied. And at last little Gerda herself did not believe it.

"I will put on my new red shoes," she said "the shoes that Kay has never seen, and then I will go down and beg the river to give him back.

"Is it true that you have taken my little playmate?" she said. "I will give you my red shoes if you will give him back to me."

She thought that the waves nodded to her strangely. Then she took her red shoes, the dearest of all her possessions, and threw them both into the river; but they fell close to the shore, and the little waves carried them back to her.

So she crept into a boat that lay among the reeds, went to the farther end, and threw the shoes out. But the boat was not fastened to the shore, and it glided away from the land.

Little Gerda was now very much afraid, and began to cry; but no one heard her except the sparrows, and they could not carry her to land; so they flew along the bank, and twittered as if to comfort her: "Here we are! here we are!"

The boat drifted with the stream, and little Gerda sat quite still, with only her stockings on her feet. Her little red shoes were floating on the



water, but they could not overtake her, for the boat was leaving them farther and farther behind.

"Perhaps the river will carry me to little Kay," thought Gerda. And so she grew more cheerful, sat up in the boat, and hour after hour watched the beautiful green banks. Then she came to a cherry orchard, in which stood a little house with quaint red-and-blue windows, and a thatched roof.

Outside stood two wooden soldiers, who presented arms to those who sailed past. Gerda called out to them, for she thought they were alive, but of course they gave no answer.

Then she called still louder, and an old woman came out of the house leaning on a crutch.

And the old woman went straight down into the water, seized the boat with her crutch, drew it ashore, and lifted little Gerda out.

"Come and tell me who you are, and how you came here," said the old lady. And Gerda told her everything; and the old woman shook her head and said, "H'm, h'm." When Gerda had told the whole story, and asked whether she had seen little Kay, the woman replied that he had not come yet, but that he would very probably pass that way.

"I have long wished for a dear little girl like you," said the old woman. "How nicely we two will get on together!" So she went into the garden and pointed with her crutch at all the rose-trees; then, beautiful and blooming as they were, they sank immediately into the dark earth, and no one could tell where they had stood.



The old woman was afraid that when Gerda saw the roses, they would remind her of home, and that she would remember little Kay and run away.

Now she took Gerda out into the flower-garden. Oh! how fragrant and lovely it was! Every flower belonging to every season was there in full bloom; no picture-book could be richer in color or more beautiful. Gerda played till the sun went down behind the tall cherry-trees; then she was tucked into a lovely bed with red silk pillows stuffed with blue violets; and as she slept she dreamed as happily as any queen on her wedding-day.

When the morning came she was again allowed to play with the flowers in the warm sunshine—and thus many days went by. Gerda knew every flower; but although there were many of them, it seemed to her that one was missing.

“Why!” said Gerda, “there are no roses here!”

And she ran in and out among the flower-beds, and searched, but there was not a rose to be found.

Then she sat down and wept, and her warm tears fell just upon the spot where a rose-tree lay buried. When her tears moistened the earth, the tree at once sprouted up as full of blossom as when it had sunk beneath the ground. Gerda embraced it, kissed the roses, and thought of the beautiful roses at home, and of little Kay.

“Oh, how I have wasted my time!” said the little girl. “I came to find Kay! Do you know where he is?” she asked the roses. “Do you believe he is dead and gone?”



"He is not dead," said the roses; "we have been in the ground, where all dead people are, but Kay was not there."

"Oh, dear," she said, "how I have wasted my time! It is now autumn, and I must not rest," and she rose up to go. Oh! how gray and gloomy it seemed out in the wide world!

## FOURTH STORY.

### THE PRINCE AND THE PRINCESS.

Gerda had to rest again. Suddenly a big Crow came hopping across the snow, just opposite to where she sat. He had been sitting a long while looking at her, turning his head to and fro; but now he said, "Caw! caw! Good day! good day!" He could not speak more plainly, but he meant to be kind to the little girl, and asked where she was going all alone out in the wide world.

The word "alone" Gerda understood very well: she quite felt the meaning of it; so she told the Crow the whole story of her life and adventures, and asked if he had seen Kay.

The Crow nodded very gravely, and said—

"That may be! that may be!"

"What! do you think so?" cried the little girl, and she nearly squeezed the Crow to death, so heartily did she kiss him.

"Gently, gently!" said the Crow. "I believe it



may be little Kay, but by this time he must have forgotten you for the Princess."

"Does he live with a Princess?" asked Gerda.

"Yes; listen," said the Crow. "But it is very difficult for me to speak your language."

And so the crow told what he knew.

"But Kay, little Kay?" asked Gerda.

"Wait a minute. We're just coming to him. One day there came a little fellow, without horse or carriage, marching quite pluckily up to the castle. His eyes sparkled like yours, he had beautiful hair, but his clothes were very poor."

"That was Kay!" cried Gerda, in great delight.

"He had a knapsack on his back," said the Crow.

"No, that must have been his sleigh," said Gerda, "for he went away with a sleigh."

"That may be," said the Crow; "I did not take much notice. When he passed through the palace gate and saw the Life Guards in silver, and mounted the staircase and saw the lackeys in gold, he was not in the least confused. He said: 'It must be tiresome to stand on the stairs—I'd rather go in.'"

"Well, of course it was Kay!" said Gerda. Oh! will you not lead me to the castle, too?"

"That is easily said," replied the Crow. "But how are we to manage it?—a little girl like you will never get permission to go right in."

"Yes, I shall," said Gerda. "When Kay hears that I am here he will bring me in."

"Wait for me yonder at the grating," said the Crow, and he wagged his head and flew away.







It was not until late in the evening, when it had grown dark, that the Crow returned.

"Caw! caw!" he said. "It is impossible for you to get into the palace, for you are barefoot, and the Guards would never allow it. But don't cry; you shall go up all the same."

When the lights were put out in the palace one by one, the Crow led Gerda to a back door.

Now they were on the staircase. A little lamp was burning in an alcove, and in the middle of the floor stood a tame Crow, turning her head from side to side and looking at Gerda, who bowed as Grandmother had taught her.

"It seems to me as if some one were coming just behind us," said Gerda, as something rushed by her; it seemed like shadows along the wall: horses with flying manes and slender legs, huntsmen and ladies and gentlemen on horseback.

"They are only the Dreams," said the Crow; "they come to take their Highnesses' thoughts out hunting."

They came into the first hall. Here the Dreams again came flitting by, and they moved so quickly that Gerda could not see the great folk. Now at last they were in the bed-chamber. She drew one of the curtains aside, and then she saw a little brown neck—oh! that must be Kay! She called his name aloud, and held the lamp toward him; he awoke, turned his head, and—it was not little Kay!

The Prince was only like him in the neck; but nevertheless he was young and handsome, the



Prince got up out of his bed, and let Gerda sleep in it; and more than that he could not do. She folded her little hands, and thought: "How good men and animals are!" And then she closed her eyes and fell quietly to sleep.

The next day she was dressed from head to foot in silk and velvet; and they invited her to stay in the castle and enjoy herself. But she only begged for a little carriage with a horse, and a little pair of boots; then she would drive out again into the wide world to find Kay.

The Prince and Princess in person helped her into the carriage, and wished her all good fortune.

"Farewell! farewell!" cried the Prince and Princess, and little Gerda wept, and the Crow wept. So they went on for the first three miles; then the Crow also said good-by, and this was the most sorrowful parting of all.

## FIFTH STORY.

### THE LITTLE ROBBER-GIRL.

They drove on through the dark forest, but the coach gleamed like a torch, dazzling the robbers' eyes, and they could not resist the temptation.

"That is gold! that is gold!" they cried, rushed forward, and seized the horses, killed the little out-riders, coachman, and footmen, and then pulled little Gerda out of the carriage.



"She is fat—she is pretty—she is fed with nut-kernels!" said the old robber-woman, who had a long beard, and eyebrows that hung down over her eyes. "She is as good as a little pet lamb; how nice she will taste." Saying this, she drew forth a shining knife, that gleamed horribly.

"Oh!" screamed the old woman at the same moment, for she was bitten in the ear by her own little daughter, whom she carried on her back, and who was wild and naughty. "You ugly thing!" said the mother; and she had not time to kill Gerda.

"I want to get into the carriage," said the little robber-girl, and she would have her own way, for she was terribly spoiled, and very obstinate.

Now the carriage stopped; they were in the middle of the court-yard in the robbers' castle. In the great old smoky hall a bright fire was burning in the middle of the stone floor.

"You shall sleep here to-night with me and with all my little animals," said the robber-girl.

They ate and drank, and then went to a corner where straw and carpets were spread out. Above, on laths and perches, nearly a hundred pigeons were sitting; they all seemed asleep, but they turned a little when the two little girls approached.

"They are all mine," said the little robber-girl. "There sit the wood-pigeons, and here's my old sweetheart 'Ba';" and she pulled a Reindeer out by the horn.

And the little girl drew a long knife from a cleft in the wall, and let it glide over the Reindeer's



neck. The poor creature kicked out with its legs, and the little robber-girl laughed, and drew Gerda into bed with her.

"Do you keep the knife while you are asleep?" asked Gerda, looking at it with alarm.

"I always sleep with a knife," replied the robber-girl. "One never knows what may happen. But now tell me again about little Kay, and why you came out into the wide world."

And Gerda told it again from the beginning; and the wood-pigeons cooed up in their cage, and said: "Coo! coo! we have seen little Kay. A white hen was carrying his sleigh; he sat in the Snow Queen's carriage, which rushed away high above the forest, when we were lying in our nest. She blew upon us little ones, and all died except us two. Coo! coo!"

"What are you saying up there?" cried Gerda. "Which way was the Snow Queen travelling? Do you know anything about it?"

"She was probably going to Lapland, for there they always have ice and snow."

In the morning Gerda told her all that the wood-pigeons had said, and the robber-girl looked quite grave, but nodded her head and said: "It's all the same; it's all the same! Do you know where Lapland is?" she asked the Reindeer.

"Who should know better than I?" the animal replied. "I was born and bred there; I ran about there in the snow-fields," and its eyes sparkled.

The robber-girl went to the Reindeer and said—



"Never mind, I will loosen your rope, and help you out, so that you may run to Lapland: but you must make good use of your legs, and carry this little girl for me to the palace of the Snow Queen."

The Reindeer sprang up with joy. The robber-girl lifted Gerda on to its back, and took care to tie her fast, and even gave her a little cushion to sit on.

And Gerda wept for joy.

"I can't bear to see you weep," said the little robber-girl. "Now you must look happy. And here are two loaves and a ham for you, so that you may not be hungry." These were tied on the Reindeer's back. The little robber-girl opened the door, and said to the Reindeer: "Now run! but take care of the little girl!"

And the Reindeer ran over stock and stone, away through the great forest, over marshes and steppes. "Hiss! hiss!" it said in the sky. It seemed as if it were sneezing red flames.

"Those are my old Northern Lights," said the Reindeer. "See how they glow." And then it ran on faster than ever, day and night.

## SIXTH STORY.

### THE LAPLAND WOMAN AND THE FINLAND WOMAN.

They stopped at a little hut. Nobody was at home but an old Lapland woman, frying fish by the light of a train-oil lamp; and the Reindeer told Gerda's whole history.



“Oh! you poor things,” said the Lapland woman; “you have a long run yet! You must go more than a hundred miles into Finland, for the Snow Queen is staying there in the country, burning Bengal lights every evening. I will write a few words on a dry cod, for I have no paper, and I will give you that to take to the Finland woman; she can give you better information than I.”

When Gerda had warmed herself and had something to eat and drink the Lapland woman wrote a few words on a dry codfish, told Gerda to take care of it, and tied her on the Reindeer, which then ran on again. And so they got to Finland, and knocked at the chimney of the Finland woman, for she had not even a door.

Then the Reindeer told his own story, and afterward little Gerda's; and the Finland woman blinked with her clever eyes; but said nothing. “You are so learned,” said the Reindeer; “I know you can tie all the winds of the world together with a bit of sewing-thread: if the sailor unties one knot, he has a good wind; if he loosens the second, it blows hard; but if he unties the third and the fourth, then comes a storm fierce enough to uproot the trees in the forest. Can you not give the little girl a draught, so that she may have the power of twelve men, and overcome the Snow Queen?”

“I can give her no greater power than she has already. Don't you see how great that is?—don't you see how men and animals are obliged to serve her, and how well she got on in the world even



with bare feet? She must not learn to know her power through us; it is in her heart, and consists in this—that she is a sweet, innocent child. If she cannot, by herself, gain access to the Snow Queen and remove the glass fragments from little Kay, we cannot help her.”

And then the Finland woman lifted little Gerda on to the Reindeer, which ran as fast as it could.

“Oh, I haven’t my boots, and I haven’t my mittens!” cried little Gerda. She felt the want of them in the cutting cold: but the Reindeer dared not stop. It ran on until it came to the great bush with the red berries; here it put Gerda down, kissed her mouth, and great tears rolled down over the animal’s cheeks. Then it ran back as fast as it could.

But now we must see how Kay was getting on. He was not thinking of little Gerda, and least of all, that she was standing outside the palace.

## SEVENTH STORY.

### WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SNOW QUEEN’S PALACE, AND AFTERWARD.

The walls of the palace were formed of the drifting snow, and the windows and doors of the cutting winds. There were more than a hundred halls, and in the middle of one was a frozen lake, and in the centre of the lake, sat the Snow Queen.

Little Kay was quite blue with cold—indeed, al-







most black; but he did not notice it, for the Snow Queen had kissed the cold shudderings away from him, and his heart was like a lump of ice.

"Now I must haste away to warmer lands," said the Snow Queen. And so she flew away, and Kay sat quite alone in the great icy hall, and looked at the pieces of ice, and thought, and thought.

At this moment little Gerda stepped through the great gate into the palace. Cutting winds were raging within, but she said her evening prayer, and the winds were lulled to rest. Then she entered the vast halls that were so cold and empty. She beheld Kay, knew him at once, threw her arms around his neck, and, holding him fast, called out: "Dear little Kay! at last I have found you!"

But he sat quite motionless, stiff and cold. Then little Gerda wept hot tears; they fell upon his breast; they penetrated into his heart, and thawed the lump of ice, melting even the little piece of glass within it.

He looked at her, and she sang the hymn!—

"Roses grow in the shady vale,  
And tell of the Christ-Child a beautiful tale."

Then Kay burst into tears; and he wept so much that the splinter of glass came out of his eye. He recognized her, and cried in delight: "Gerda! dear Gerda! where have you been all this time? And where have I been?" And he looked all around him. "How cold it is here! how large and empty!"



And Gerda kissed his cheeks, and they grew rosy again; she kissed his eyes, and they shone like her own; she kissed his hands and feet, and he became healthy and cheerful. They talked of Grandmother, and the roses on the roof; and wherever they went the winds lay down and the sun burst forth. When they reached the bush with the red berries, the Reindeer was standing there waiting; it had brought another Reindeer, whose udders were full, and who gave the little ones its warm milk, and kissed them. Then they carried Kay and Gerda, first to the Finland woman, and then to the Lapland woman, who had made them new clothes and put her sleigh in order.

The Reindeer and his companion ran by their side, and followed them as far as the boundary of the country. Here, where the first green leaves were sprouting, Kay and Gerda took leave of the Reindeer and the Lapland woman. "Farewell!" they said. The first little birds of spring began to twitter, and the forest trees were in bud. Suddenly a young girl came riding out of the wood on a splendid horse which Gerda knew (for it was the one that had drawn her golden coach). This was the little robber-girl. She knew Gerda at once, and Gerda knew her too; it was a joyful meeting. And Gerda patted her on the cheek, and asked after the Prince and Princess.

"They have gone to foreign countries," said the robber-girl.

"But the Crow?" said Gerda.



"Why, the Crow is dead," she replied. "But now tell me how you got hold of him."

And Gerda and Kay both told their story.

But Gerda and Kay went hand in hand, and as they wandered on, the flowers of spring burst forth, and all the world was clad in green. The church bells pealed, and they recognized the high steeples and the great town; it was the one in which they lived. They went to the Grandmother's door, up the stairs, and into the room, where everything remained in its usual place. The grandfather's clock said, "Tick! tack!" and the hands were moving; but as Kay and Gerda passed through the door they noticed that they were now grown up.

And Kay and Gerda looked into each other's eyes, and all at once they understood the old hymn:—

"Roses grow in the shady vale,  
And tell of the Christ-Child a beautiful tale."

There they both sat, grown up, and yet children—children in heart—and it was summer, warm, beautiful summer.



## THE ANGEL.

“WHENEVER a good child dies, an Angel of God comes down to earth, takes the dead child in his arms, and, spreading out his large white wings, flies with him over all the places that were dear to him. And the Angel gathers a handful of flowers, and takes them to the good God, that they may bloom yet more beautifully in Heaven than they did upon earth. And the flower which most pleases its Creator receives a voice, and supremely happy, joins in the chorus of the blessed angels.”

Thus spoke an Angel of God while carrying a dead child to Heaven, and the child listened as though in a dream, and together they flew over all those places where the child had formerly played, and they passed over gardens full of lovely flowers.

“Which flower shall we take with us and plant in Heaven?” asked the Angel.

And there stood a fair delicate rose-tree, but an evil hand had broken the stem, so that all the branches, with their large, half-opened buds, hung faded down to the ground. “Poor tree!” said the child, “let us take it, that it may bloom again with the good God in Heaven.” And the Angel took it, and kissed the child, and the little one half-opened his eyes. They plucked many a splendid garden



flower, but they also took the meek little daisy and the wild hearts-ease. "Now we have flowers enough!" said the child, and the Angel seemed to assent, but he did not yet fly up to Heaven.

It was night; it was very still; they stayed near a town; they hovered over one of its narrowest streets, where straw, ashes, and rubbish of all kinds were scattered; there had been a removal that day, and lying on the ground were nothing but things unseemly.

Amid this confusion the Angel pointed to the broken pieces of an old flower-pot, and a lump of earth fallen out of it; they were only held together by the roots of a large, faded field-flower, which was no longer worth looking at, and had been thrown out into the street. "We will take this flower with us," said the Angel. "I will tell thee about it as we are flying."

And they flew away, and the Angel spake as follows: "There once lived in a low cellar, down in that little narrow street, a poor, sick boy. He had been confined to his bed from his earliest years; perhaps, now and then, he was able to take a few turns up and down his little room on his crutches, but that was all he could do. Sometimes, during the summer, the sunbeams would stream through his little cellar-window, and then, if the child sat up and felt the warm sun shining upon him, and could see the crimson blood in his slight, wasted, transparent fingers, as he held them up to the light, he would say, 'To-day I have been out!'



He only knew the pleasant woods and their bright vernal green by the neighbor's son bringing him the first fresh boughs of the beech-tree, which he would hold over his head, and then fancy he was under the shade of the beech-trees, with the birds warbling, and the sun shining around him.

“One day in spring the neighbor's son brought him some field-flowers, and among them was one with a root, so it was put into a flower-pot and placed at the window, close by the bed, and, being carefully planted, it flourished, and put forth fresh shoots, and bore flowers every year. It was like a beautiful garden to the poor boy, his little treasure upon earth; he watered it, and tended it, taking care that every sunbeam, from the first to the last, which penetrated his little low window, should fall upon the plant. And its flowers, with their soft colors and fragrance, mingled with his dreams, and toward them he turned when he was dying, when Our Lord called him to Himself. The child has now been a year with the blessed—for a year the plant has stood by the window, faded and forgotten, and to-day it was thrown out among the rubbish into the street. And this is the flower which we have just now taken, for this poor, faded field-flower has given more pleasure than the most splendid blossoms in the garden of a queen.”

“But how do you know all this?” asked the child, whom the Angel was bearing to Heaven. “How do I know it?” said the Angel, “I was myself that little sick boy who went upon crutches.



Ought I not to know my own flower?" And the child opened wide its eyes, and looked into the Angel's fair, bright countenance—and in the same moment they were in Heaven.

And the dead child received wings like the Angel's and flew with him hand in hand; and a voice was given to the poor, faded, field-flower and it sang with the Angels surrounding the great God, some very near Him, and others forming large circles farther and farther away, extending into Infinity, but all equally blessed.

And they all sang together, the Angels, the good child, and the poor, faded field flower which had lain among the rubbish of that dark and narrow street.







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